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ENGLISH CHURCH MONUMENTS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

History and Representation

NIGEL SAUL

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NIGEL SAUL

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For my family

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Preface

Church monuments have long been the subject of antiquarian study. From as far back as the 1790s, when Richard Gough published his *Sepulchral Monuments*, they have attracted the attention of those seeking to reconstruct England's past from study of her antiquities. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, they have also received the attention of historians of art and sculpture. Prior and Gardner's great monograph, published in 1912, put monuments at the very heart of research into the medieval plastic arts. More recently, the study of monuments has been undertaken by archaeologists and students of material culture. The specialist discourse of archaeology has crept into more than a few recent discussions of the subject. This monograph approaches monuments from a different perspective again, that of the political, social, and religious historian. The book focuses, in particular, on the commemorated—on their ambitions and aspirations, on the ways in which they were represented on monuments, and on the uses which they made of their monuments. While it by no means excludes issues of design and production—both are considered in some detail—such matters are approached mainly from the perspective of the social meaning of monuments. The principal aim of the book is to integrate the study of church monuments into the mainstream study of the medieval past.

In the course of writing these pages I have incurred a considerable number of debts. The first is to all the incumbents, churchwardens, and keyholders who have arranged access to locked churches for me, sometimes at short notice. I am grateful to them all for giving me such assistance. I am even more grateful to those incumbents who have managed to keep their churches open and accessible. It is understandable that today a great many churches should be kept locked. Thefts of church treasures have become a serious problem for the Church of England, and brasses often figure among the objects stolen and disposed of abroad. None the less, the locking of churches, a practice becoming increasingly common, is still to be regretted. Not only is it at odds with the Church's mission of evangelization; it is discouraging to all those who take pleasure in visiting these buildings both to savour their atmosphere—to find God—and to study their architecture and contents. To the diminishing number of incumbents who make a commitment to keeping their churches open, I pay generous tribute. All with an interest in cherishing this country's heritage stand in their debt.

I would also like to record my appreciation to those who have assisted me on aspects of the subject where my own expertise is sadly limited. Like many who grew up in the 1960s, I became interested in monuments through visiting churches to do brass rubbings. Indeed, it was partly through my early interest in brasses that I developed in interest in medieval history more generally. Later, when I began working professionally on the history of medieval England, I found my interest

in monuments extending to sculpted effigies, incised slabs, and the all too easily overlooked cross slab grave covers. Even today, however, I am conscious that I know much less about these other kinds of monuments—and least of all about grave covers—than I do about brasses. I am also conscious that I know much less about the production of monuments than I do about the lives of those whom they commemorate. Accordingly, I would like to record my thanks to all who have allowed me to draw on their own areas of specialist knowledge. In particular, I would like to thank Sally Badham, Jon Bayliss, Philip Lankester, and Sophie Oosterwijk. I would also like to thank Paul Cockerham for his good-humoured advice on a whole range of matters to do with monuments, most notably Cornish monuments and patterns of commemoration on the Continent.

A number of friends and scholars have kindly read parts of the book for me. Jerome Bertram, Anthony Musson, Brian Kemp, Philip Lankester, and John Blair have read drafts of chapters which relate to their own areas of expertise. I am grateful to them all for undertaking this labour on my behalf. I owe an especial debt of gratitude to Sally Badham for reading a draft of the entire book and for commenting on it in detail. Whatever merits the book may have owes much to the range and perceptiveness of her criticism.

Most of the reading for, and some of the writing of, this book has been done in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries of London. Without the resources of this magnificent collection I would hardly have been able to delve as deeply as I have into the extensive antiquarian literature in the field. The Society's library is not only by far the largest and most wide-ranging collection of its kind; it also offers the convenience of having the material available on the open shelves, making it a uniquely attractive place to work. I am very grateful to Bernard Nurse, the recently retired Librarian, and his staff for the assistance they have given on my many visits.

In conclusion, may I thank Royal Holloway, University of London, for supporting the cost of research visits and for the award of a year's sabbatical leave in 2006–2007.

The dedication is to those who have been patient with my enthusiasm for monuments, accompanying me on visits to churches and regularly assisting with the downloading of digital photographs.

Nigel Saul

Royal Holloway, University of London
April 2008

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1–3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15–16, 21–4, 26, 28–30, 34–6, 38, 42, 45, 46, 48, 50, 53–6, 61–3, 65–7, 69, 70, 72, 74, 75, 77, 78, author; 14, 17, 25, 40, 41, 43, 46, 58, 60, 64, 73, H. Martin Stuchfield; 4, 5, 12, 13, 37, 44, 57, Sally Badham; 47, 68, 76, collection of the late F. A. Greenhill; 18, 32 Dean and Canons of Westminster Abbey; 6, 20, John Crook; 7, Christopher Whittick; 27, S. Oosterwijk; 31, 39, National Monuments Record; 33, Courtauld Institute of Art; 49, Deborah Bircham; 51, Richard K. Morris; 52, A. F. Kersting; 71, Victoria and Albert Museum.

Abbreviated References

Full details of titles are to be found in the Bibliography

BAA	British Archaeological Association
BL	British Library
CCR	*Calendar of Close Rolls*
CFR	*Calendar of Fine Rolls*
Chichele's Register	*Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414–1443*, ed. E. F. Jacob (4 vols., Oxford, 1943–7)
CM	*Church Monuments*
CMS Newsletter	*Church Monuments Society Newsletter*
Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*	J. Coales (ed.), *The Earliest English Brasses: Patronage, Style and Workshops, 1270–1350* (London, 1987)
CPR	*Calendar of Patent Rolls*
d.	died
Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*	F. A. Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs* (2 vols., London, 1976)
JBAA	*Journal of the British Archaeological Association*
Lincs. Church Notes	*Lincolnshire Church Notes made by Gervase Holles, A.D. 1634–A.D. 1642*, ed. R. E. G. Cole (Lincoln Record Society, 1, 1911)
MBS Bulletin	*Monumental Brass Society Bulletin*
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
TMBS	*Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society*
TNA: PRO	The National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office)
VCH	*Victoria County History*

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1

Antiquaries and Historians: The Study of Monuments

From the earliest times societies have raised monuments to the dead. Among these are some of the most remarkable structures ever created by mankind. In the Ancient World the great pyramid of Khufu in Egypt was accounted one of the Seven Wonders of the World. At Halicarnassus the tomb which Queen Artemiesia built in honour of her husband Mausoleus gave the world the word 'mausoleum'. Where the commemoration of the great was concerned, monuments went with monumentality.

In the past, as now, monuments have attracted the admiring attentions of the curious. Well before the Reformation visitors flocked to Westminster Abbey to see the tombs of England's kings. Such, indeed, was the commotion caused at times by these visitors that the monks had to lay down rules governing their proper conduct.[1] Some of those who, over the centuries, have taken an interest in monuments have been attracted to them principally by the fame of those they commemorate. When looking at monuments, they have felt themselves in some way paying tribute through them to the persons whose memory they honour. Such is in all probability the attitude of many of those who visit Bladon to see the grave of Sir Winston Churchill. Others, however, have been attracted more by the beauty or poignancy of the monument itself. Queen Charlotte is said to have burst into tears when she set eyes on Banks's famous sculpture of Penelope Boothby at the Royal Academy exhibition.[2] Whatever may be the main interest of those who take an interest in monuments, however, one thing holds true: the monument must arouse a reaction. Monuments were expected to provoke a reaction from onlookers. If they failed to provoke such, they had failed in their primary purpose; they were of no value.

In the churches of England and Wales there remain many thousands of monuments from the Middle Ages. Some of these are elaborate structures, adorned with canopies or entablatures, depicting the deceased in his or her finery and attended by weepers and angels. Others are smaller, more run-of-the-mill affairs, less obviously pretentious. Those of early date typically take the form of a simple coffin slab, carved or incised on the surface with a cross. The more stylish and

[1] Miss Barbara Harvey in a letter to *The Times*, 9 Sept. 1980.

[2] N. Pevsner, *Derbyshire* (Harmondsworth, 1978), 62. The monument was destined for Ashbourne, where it remains.

opulent of late medieval monuments might comprise an effigy, tomb chest, canopy, and inscriptions; the smaller and cheaper, an effigy and inscription—or just an inscription. Monuments might be fashioned from freestone, Purbeck marble, alabaster, wood, or brass. They might be sculpted or incised, set in the floor or placed against a wall. The sheer variety of medieval monuments attests the wide social range of the patron class. Those commemorated by them embraced both the exalted and the relatively humble in society. It is likely that more monuments of the medieval period survive in England than in any area of equivalent size in Europe.[3] On the Continent the hazards of war, revolution, destruction, and rebuilding have all exacted a heavy toll over the centuries. In England that toll has, relatively speaking, been much lower. Not only have English churches escaped the worst of the ravages of religious, political, and military upheaval; north of the Channel there was much less rebuilding of fabrics in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when medieval sculpture was held in low esteem. It is worth remembering, none the less, that a great many monuments have still been lost. In the course of the religious struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries huge numbers of monuments were defaced or entirely destroyed. As a result of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, virtually all monuments in the religious houses declared redundant were condemned to the scrap heap. In the towns and cities, constant reordering of church interiors has ensured a lower survival rate of monuments than in country churches. All the same, the corpus of funerary sculpture which has come down to us is still of some size.

The study of medieval monuments has a long history. Interest in monuments of the medieval period was already beginning before the period itself had ended. Perhaps the first to record monuments of note—or monuments to persons of note—was William Worcester (d. 1482), sometime secretary of Sir John Fastolf, who sometimes mentioned tombs in his notes of his travels round the realm. After the Reformation there was a growth of interest in medieval funerary sculpture among the new antiquary class. By the late sixteenth century monuments were attracting the attention of the heralds, who valued their often elaborate armorials as evidence of family pedigrees and entitlement to bear arms. John Philipot (1588/9–1645), Somerset Herald, assembled a rich harvest of notes from the churches of his native Kent. Slightly later, Elias Ashmole (1617–92), Windsor Herald, went on note-taking tours of churches of the Thames Valley.[4] In the

[3] Although there are a large number of incised slabs in France, western Germany, and the Low Countries, these survive in quantity only from the late 15th cent. According to the 'Monuments Historiques' database (http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/inventai/patrimoine/), in France there are 365 incised slabs from the 13th cent., 620 from the 14th, 532 from the 15th, and 1,292 from the 16th. No counterpart is found in continental Europe to the vast quantities of early cross slab grave covers in England. For medieval monuments in Flanders, see R. van Belle, *Vlakke grafmonumenten en memorietaferelen met persoonsafbeeldingen in West-Vlaanderen: Een inventaris, funeraire symboliek en overzicht van het kostuum* (Bruges, 2007), from which it is again clear that numbers only substantially increase from the late 15th cent. I am grateful to Paul Cockerham and Jerome Bertram for their advice on these matters.

[4] 'A Book of Church Notes by John Philipot, Somerset Herald', ed. C. R. Councer, in *A Seventeenth Century Miscellany* (Kent Records, 17, 1960); Oxford, Bodleian Lib., MS Ashmole 850.

years of tension and instability which preceded the Civil War the recording of monuments was informed by greater urgency. Sir William Dugdale (1605–86), the Garter King of Arms, was one figure concerned to record the country's more important monuments lest their witness might be lost for ever. Dugdale's 'Book of Monuments', compiled in 1640–1, with drawings by William Sedgwick, is perhaps the most remarkable and beautiful book on monuments ever produced.[5]

Monuments became the subject of more serious scholarly study in the mid-eighteenth century. For the first time, they were considered worthy of attention in their own right rather than for the genealogical information they carried. The background to this shift of emphasis lay in the rise of gentlemanly antiquarian studies in the early years of the century. The foundation of the Society of Antiquaries in 1707 betokened a new attitude to the past: one which was at once more inquisitive and more respectful. The physical remains of the past were now seen as one of the means by which the secrets of that past could be unlocked and explored to tell a story of national origins. A key figure in these developments was Richard Gough (d. 1809), a Hertfordshire landowner, and Director of the Society of Antiquaries. Gough's *Sepulchral Monuments* represented a milestone in the study of funerary sculpture in England.[6] The inspiration for Gough's work was an ambitious project on which, half a century earlier, the Abbé Montfaucon had embarked in France. Montfaucon, a textual scholar, antiquary and historian, had set himself the task of compiling a history of his native land illustrated by manuscripts, sculptures, seals, and inscriptions—antiquities of any sort which could shed light on the habits of past ages.[7] To this end, he had employed a remarkable man, the royal equerry Roger de Gaignières, to gather the necessary source materials for him. In the space of a decade or so Gaignières, with two assistants, had accumulated a huge collection of drawings of sculptures, inscriptions, seals but, above all, of church monuments. Gaignières' drawings, later worked by Montfaucon's draughtsmen into plates, formed one of the most remarkable records of funerary sculpture ever made.

The work of Montfaucon and Gaignières spurred Gough to undertake a comparable project for England with the ambition of describing and illustrating the tombs and effigies of the aristocracy and detailing the lives of those commemorated. Gough went further than Montfaucon in seeking to use monuments as a source for manners broadly defined. The art of monuments, he believed, could reflect cultural and political change, mirroring in its iconography shifts in social, religious, and sartorial taste. Montfaucon, while assigning dates to monuments and arranging them in chronological order, had not exploited them for illustrations of national modes or attempted to compare monuments with one another; nor had he laid

[5] BL, Add MS 71474.

[6] R. Gough, *The Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain* (3 vols. in 5, London, 1786–99). S. F. Badham, 'Richard Gough and the Flowering of Romantic Antiquarianism', *CM* 2 (1987), 32–43, stresses the importance of Gough's work in switching the focus of attention from inscriptions to figures and architectural accessories.

[7] For Montfaucon's project, see F. Haskell, *History and its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven and London, 1993), 131–5.

down any rules by which they might be judged. In Gough's view, monuments repaid examination for their wider meaning because it was from such sources that areas of the nation's past on which written sources were silent could be opened up for investigation.[8] Gough went to considerable lengths to procure illustrations for his volumes, begging them from friends, exploiting the resources of the Society of Antiquaries, and commissioning draughtsmen such as John Carter to make drawings for him. A relatively wealthy man, he met all the most substantial costs himself. He saw national honour as requiring the construction of a visual taxonomy of this kind and he was confident of being able to advance beyond the standards set by continental scholars.

Gough's *Sepulchral Monuments* was rightly judged a remarkable achievement. Quite apart from its scale, which was unprecedented, it set new standards for the description, recording, and illustration of medieval monuments. It was a tribute to its achievement that it attracted a generation of imitators. In 1817 Charles Stothard embarked on the publishing of what was to become his *Monumental Effigies of Great Britain*, a work in a similar vein which reaped the benefit of another forty years of scholarship.[9] Stothard prided himself on the quality of his prints, which were noticeably more accurate than Gough's. In 1826 Edward Blore published his *Monumental Remains of Noble and Eminent Persons*, another volume in the same tradition which combined prints of distinguished monuments with accompanying text on those commemorated by them.[10] It was Gough, however, who had paved the way, showing how the systematic comparison of visual media could elicit historical information and demonstrating the contribution which the study of monuments could make to the evaluation of England's past.

The study of monuments received a further boost in the early nineteenth century from the Catholic revival in the Church of England. The growth of ritualism associated with the Cambridge Movement and the Camden Society stimulated a renewal of enthusiasm for medieval culture and for Gothic as the style most appropriate for the setting of worship; and this, in turn, fed into and encouraged an interest in medieval monuments. In the mid-nineteenth century a number of specialist works dealing with monuments were published. None of these even began to approach Gough's project in scale or ambition; a few, however, pushed the boundary of inquiry forward into the hitherto largely unexplored areas of early and non- or semi-effigial monuments. The two monographs published by Charles Boutell and E. L. Cutts on early stone sculpture were of particular importance in this respect;[11] Boutell was also responsible for a well-received volume of folio plates on brasses.[12] At the same time, articles and notes in local antiquarian periodicals focused attention on the monuments of particular churches or localities.

[8] R. Sweet, *Antiquaries. The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 2004).

[9] C. A. Stothard, *Monumental Effigies of Great Britain* (London, 1817).

[10] The text was by Philip Bliss.

[11] C. Boutell, *Christian Monuments in England and Wales* (London, 1854); E. L. Cutts, *A Manual for the Study of Sepulchral Slabs and Crosses of the Middle Ages* (London, 1849).

[12] C. Boutell, *The Monumental Brasses of England: A Series of Engravings on Wood* (London, 1849).

Periodically reports were published of the discovery, or rediscovery, of monuments buried or cast aside in less respectful times.[13]

It was around this time that a development occurred which was to have baneful long-term consequences for the study of medieval church monuments. This was the separation of the study of brasses from the study of other types of monument. The reason for the turn of events was simple: it was possible to 'rub' brasses—that is, to take tracings of them with heelball. The growth in popularity of brass rubbing in the nineteenth century led to a concentration of interest on brasses relative to other types of monument. Societies of brass rubbing 'collectors' were established in the two ancient universities. Collections of rubbings were built up by enthusiasts such as A. W. Franks and Herbert Haines. In the years from 1860 a series of textbooks on brasses of varying quality were published. Macklin's *Monumental Brasses*, which appeared in 1890, was to prove the most popular and most enduring: it was to remain in print for well over half a century.[14] The most substantial and penetrating study, however, was Haines's *Manual of Monumental Brasses* of 1861, a remarkable work which broke new ground in its originality and rigour of method.[15] Haines not only placed the study of brasses in an art-historical context; he also, crucially, attempted to identify styles of engraving and to speculate on workshop origins. The seminal quality of Haines's insights has long been acknowledged. At the time, however, those insights fell on stony ground, attracting little interest from the authors of textbooks whose approach remained resolutely costume-driven. In a succession of studies for the general reader brasses were classified and described purely by reference to the costume of the commemorated; the possibility that there might be alternative lines of inquiry was all but ignored. The costume methodology was also followed in the study of incised slabs. Greenhill's *Incised Effigial Slabs*, comprehensive as it was in recording, was unoriginal in matters of interpretation.[16]

In the first half of the twentieth century, when brass rubbing was in decline, writing on brasses got stuck in a methodological rut. A seminal article by J. P. C. Kent on style, which took up and developed some of Haines's ideas, was virtually ignored by specialists in the field.[17] Only in the 1970s, in the wake of a renewed brass rubbing boom, were new advances in understanding of the subject made. On the initiative of a younger generation of scholars, stylistic analysis was taken up with vigour and made the means to a systematic classification of pre-Reformation brasses.[18] At the same time, a series of innovative studies was made

[13] For example, R. Westmacott, 'Monumental Effigies at Gonalston, Notts.', *Archaeological Jnl.* 6 (1849), 5–13.

[14] H. W. Macklin, *Monumental Brasses* (London, 1890, 7th edn., 1953).

[15] H. Haines, *A Manual of Monumental Brasses* (London, 1861, repr. Bath, 1970).

[16] Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*.

[17] J. P. C. Kent, 'Monumental Brasses: A New Classification of Military Effigies, *c*.1360–*c*.1485', *JBAA*, 3rd ser. 12 (1949), 70–97.

[18] R. Emmerson, 'Monumental Brasses: London Design, *c*.1420–1485', *JBAA* 131 (1978), 50–78; R. Greenwood, 'Haines's Cambridge School of Brasses', *TMBS* 11 (1971), 2–12; S. Badham, *Brasses from the North-East: A Study of the Brasses made in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Durham and Northumberland* (London, 1979); eadem, 'The Suffolk School of Brasses', *TMBS* 13 (1980), 41–67.

of other aspects of the subject. John Page-Phillips devoted a major monograph to palimpsests—that is, to brasses taken up and reused—while Paul Binski, Nicholas Rogers, and John Blair looked afresh at the earliest brasses, arguing for their origins in the early fourteenth rather than the thirteenth century.[19] Much of this revisionist work received appropriately magisterial summation in Malcolm Norris's *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials* and *The Craft*, published in 1977 and 1978 respectively.[20]

While brasses thus emerged as the subject of detailed scholarly attention in their own right, the study of sculpted effigies was absorbed into the history of sculpture. For the most part, those who wrote about stone and alabaster effigies were those who wrote about the medieval carved stonework more generally. In 1912 E. S. Prior and A. Gardner published a massive illustrated textbook on medieval sculpture which treated tomb effigies alongside statuary on church façades, figurative carving on reredoses, and other major examples of the carver's art.[21] For purposes of classification Prior and Gardner grouped tomb effigies into 'schools' associated with the workshops called into being by building programmes at cathedrals and greater churches. Methodologically, there was much to be said for treating effigial funerary sculpture alongside related effigial art: funerary and 'façade' figures were not infrequently the work of the same carvers. None the less, it was unfortunate that the study of sculpted monuments should have become separated from the study of brasses and—for that matter—from that of incised and cross slabs. Not only was little or no distinction made by contemporaries between the various forms of monument; for us today it makes excellent sense to treat the different types of monuments together, for only in that way can an overall view of the subject be gained. In contexts where the intellectual approach is purely art historical, there may well be a case for assimilating monuments to the broader study of sculpture. But where the social and cultural significance of monuments becomes the centre of attention, it makes far better sense to look at all types of monument together.

The appropriation of the study of sculpted effigies to art history could have had the highly beneficial effect of encouraging a more sophisticated methodology than that employed at the time in the study of brasses. In some ways, however, this was not to be the case. As Harry Tummers has pointed out, the concept of 'schools' as used by Prior and Gardner was actually a highly problematical one. From much of the medieval period quite simply too few effigies survive to allow firm identification of particular 'schools' or workshops. Only from the end of the fourteenth century does analysis by workshop begin to carry conviction. To this criticism could be added the secondary charge that the co-authors' hypothesis of such workshops being urban-based and associated with building programmes at

[19] J. Page-Phillips, *Palimpsests: The Backs of Monumental Brasses* (London, 1980); Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*.

[20] M. W. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials* (2 vols., London, 1977); idem, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft* (London, 1978).

[21] E. S. Prior and A. Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure-Sculpture in England* (Cambridge, 1912).

the big cathedrals and abbeys is itself open to question. There are good grounds for thinking that for long production was based at or near quarries.[22] The ill-founded notion of 'schools' of sculptured effigies may have sent generations of researchers on the wrong track in their search for the men who carved the effigies.

Prior and Gardner's work, like that of other contemporary writers, also suffered from the drawback of adopting a somewhat old-fashioned approach to dating. In common with the writers on brasses, Prior and Gardner relied principally on the details of armour and costume in assigning dates to effigies. These details, however, were often insecurely dated, and an element of circularity entered into the whole business of dating as one ill-documented monument was dated by reference to another. Surprisingly for art historians, Prior and Gardner paid little or no attention to the possibility of style as an aid to deciding date. When they addressed matters of artistic style, their remarks were generally vague and unconvincing. Only after the Second World War was the costume-based approach, with its roots in the work of the antiquaries, replaced by a more methodologically rigorous one which recognized a place for style. The turning-point was represented by the publication in 1955 of Laurence Stone's *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages*, the first work by an English author to attempt to 'evolve a detailed chronological classification on the basis of stylistic development'.[23] Although only a small part of Stone's book was devoted to funerary monuments, Stone offered an exemplary discussion of the evolution of medieval figure sculpture from the point of view of attitude and treatment of the body and representation of drapery folds. Stone's methodological assumption was clear: details of armour and fashion changed too slowly or irregularly to be of use as tools of analysis or guides to date; consideration of style and attitude must come first.

Stone's pioneering work ushered in a new approach to the study of medieval tomb sculpture, one more firmly rooted in the techniques of art history. It was the sort of approach which, outside England, was to find its grandest expression in Panofsky's *Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini*.[24] It would be wrong to suggest that Stone's work was accorded the immediate compliment of flattery by imitation; it was not. In the 1960s and 1970s the monuments of the post-Reformation period benefited from a far greater degree of attention than those of the Middle Ages. Not until 1980 was a monograph published which applied Stone's methodology to the study of a discrete body of medieval sculpture. This was Tummers's *Early Secular Effigies in England: The Thirteenth Century*.[25] Since then, Phillip Lindley's work has applied art historical techniques to the study of funerary sculpture of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, most notably to the monuments at Abergavenny.[26] At the same time, a

[22] See below, 64–5.

[23] L. Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1955).

[24] E. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini* (London and New York, 1964).

[25] H. A. Tummers, *Early Secular Effigies in England: The Thirteenth Century* (Leiden, 1980).

[26] P. Lindley, *Gothic to Renaissance: Essays on Sculpture in England* (Stamford, 1995); idem, 'Two Fourteenth-Century Tomb Monuments at Abergavenny and the Mournful End of the Hastings

succession of articles in *Church Monuments*, the journal of the Church Monuments Society, has adopted broadly similar methodologies. As a result, the study of sculpted monuments has found itself much more firmly rooted in the discipline of art history than has the parallel study of brasses. The medieval sculpted effigy, sprung from the same stock as the niche figure, has made it the natural object of appreciation of those whose primary interest lies in the history of sculpture as a form of art.

One of the most urgent tasks facing students of medieval commemoration is to achieve the reintegration of the two branches of the subject. There is no intellectual justification for the separate study of brasses and sculpted monuments. The distinction between the two made its unfortunate appearance 150 years ago in the wake of the first brass rubbing 'boom'. Antiquaries such as Richard Gough and the other pioneers in the field of monuments gave equal and ready attention to all forms of commemoration; they did not divide into specialists concentrating on one form or another. The market in funerary sculpture was one which evolved rapidly in the Middle Ages, showing remarkable sensitivity to changes in taste and fashion. Types of monument popular in one century might be less popular—or, at least, less popular with the elite—in the next. Types of stone popular in one century might be less popular much later. Purbeck marble was fashionable in the thirteenth century, but less so in the fourteenth; alabaster swept all before it in the fifteenth. The rise of brasses was one phase or episode in the constant evolution of taste. To focus attention on only one type of monument is to gain a picture of only part of the overall market in commemorative sculpture.

A lead in the direction of reintegration has already been given by Jonathan Finch in his study of church monuments in Norfolk before 1850.[27] Finch's approach has been to examine the totality of monuments in four areas of the county, establishing the chronology of their distribution and evaluating the sample against social background to achieve an understanding of the development of commemoration and the motives behind it. Finch looks at cross slabs, wall monuments, brasses, incised slabs, and ledger stones; he also takes note of lost monuments recorded by antiquaries. He does not, however, consider churchyard monuments. His method is that of the archaeologist. He pays little attention to matters of style and design except to the extent that these are indicative of social norms. His prime concern is to examine the full range of monuments as a measure of the place of commemoration in the structures and material culture of society.

Finch's approach attests a welcome development in the recent study of church monuments: namely, the appearance of a methodological diversity, which has helped weaken traditional barriers and open up new avenues of research. No longer

Earls of Pembroke', in J. R. Kenyon and D. M. Williams (eds.), *Cardiff: Architecture and Archaeology in the Medieval Diocese of Llandaff* (BAA Conference Transactions, 29, 2006).

[27] J. Finch, *Church Monuments in Norfolk before 1850: An Archaeology of Commemoration* (British Archaeological Reports British Series, 317, 2000). In 1980 brasses and sculpted monuments were brought together in a pioneering general survey of monuments—post-medieval as well as medieval: B. Kemp, *English Church Monuments* (London, 1980).

are methodologies confined principally to analysis of costume or workshops in the case of brasses, or the history of sculpture in the case of other types of monument. Alternative ways of approaching and understanding monuments are being pursued and explored. The organization of production, for example, has been studied by numerous scholars, notably Phillip Lindley and Sally Badham.[28] Regional studies focusing on monuments of the medieval period have been undertaken by B. and M. Gittos and A. McClain (as well as by Finch himself).[29] The role of monuments in the creation and sustaining of family dynastic strategies has been analysed by historians of late medieval gentry society, including the present author.[30] The monuments of children and cadaver effigies are genres which have received the attention of Sophie Oosterwijk.[31] Growing interest has been shown in the recording and study of early cross slabs, with Peter Ryder building on the important work of Laurence Butler.[32] Behind this welcome diversity lies an increasing interest in monuments by scholars who have developed methodologies in other disciplines and are applying these to studies of funerary sculpture.

A key aim of the present study is to offer an account of medieval church monuments which recognizes and accepts the current diversity of studies in the field. Rejecting the assumption that brasses should be considered apart from other types of monument, it will subject all commemorative forms used in the Middle Ages to review—cross slabs, relief effigies, incised slabs as well as brasses—the particular emphasis on each varying according to the period and the subject under discussion. Methodologically, the approach will be that of the historian. The corpus of monuments will be examined less as examples of fine art than as expressions of the social, cultural, and religious assumptions of the age in which they were produced. Particular attention will be given to the ways in which those commemorated represented themselves on their monuments, either through their effigies or textually in epitaphs. A strong emphasis will be placed on the roles which monuments played in the social and religious strategies of those who commissioned them. Monuments were conceived as performing principally two functions—those of engaging the living in aid of the dead and providing evidence of the standing of the deceased and his family in the local community. It is anticipated that by paying attention to the rich secular and religious discourses on monuments the kind of socio-historical contextualization will be achieved which has so successfully been developed in their own period by the early modernists.[33]

For the medievalist, monuments provide an important, and yet a strangely neglected, source for the reconstruction of past lives. For more than a few among

[28] See below, 63–4. [29] See below, 40–2.

[30] N. E. Saul, *Death, Art, and Memory in Medieval England: The Cobham Family and their Monuments, 1300–1500* (Oxford, 2001).

[31] S. Oosterwijk, 'Chrysoms, Shrouds and Infants: A Question of Terminology', *CM* 15 (2000), 44–64; eadem, 'Food for Worms—Food for Thought: The Appearance and Interpretation of the "Verminous" Cadaver in Britain and Europe', *CM* 20 (2005), 40–80. [32] See below, 43.

[33] See in particular N. Llewellyn, *Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge, 2000); P. Cockerham, *Continuity and Change: Memorialisation and the Cornish Funeral Monument Industry* (British Archaeological Reports British Series, 412, 2006).

the commemorated, the monument may be the only historical source to have come down to us. This is most likely to be the case in respect of such groups as the rural freeholders, lesser gentry, merchants, and minor clergy, for whom there is otherwise little or no evidence of interiority and personal taste. For these groups, the witness provided by the monument will be of especial value in opening a window onto a world of social and religious belief otherwise largely hidden. For the better born, and thus the better documented, there is likely to be at least some other source material, either documentary or physical. In these cases the witness of the monument will be of use in supplementing that from other sources—offering either an original perspective or, at the very least, a perspective different from that offered by the documentary corpus.

Whatever evidence the monument may afford will be interrogated in the same way as that of any other source or 'text'. No particular theoretical claim is made here for the unique character of monuments as a source; and certainly no attempt will be made to privilege them over all other sources. It may be the case, as sometimes suggested, that direct communication with the artefacts of a past society brings insights which other classes of evidence cannot: it is naturally tempting for students of monuments to suppose that that is so. Yet it would be wrong to deny that such artefacts raise problems of interpretation just as much as any other material deposit from the past. Monuments may in some cases be fictions, deliberately designed to mislead. It has been suggested that this is so with a few very spectacular series of monuments, such as those at Cobham (Kent).[34] The intention here is simply to place the evidence of monuments alongside that from other sources in such a way as to ensure a dialogue between the different classes of evidential deposit. As the late R. Allen Brown said, the past is a seamless web, and the study of material objects is just one of the techniques by which it may be explored.[35]

An important question raised by a study of this kind is the relationship between the monuments and the society or culture which produced them. Are monuments to be seen principally as products and expressions of the structures of society; or are they, rather, to be seen playing a role in shaping and constituting those structures? Should monuments, in other words, be seen as shedding light on the general history of society, or is the relationship actually inverse: to understand monuments, do we need to understand society first? The problem can be illustrated by a consideration of the brass of John Mersdon (d. 1426), rector of Thurcaston, at Thurcaston (Leics.) (Fig. 46). This is a brass of considerable grandeur and complexity: certainly grander than most memorials to parochial clergy of the late Middle Ages. Its size and ambition tell us that Mersdon must have been someone of more than local importance. Are we, in that case, entitled to use the brass as evidence of Mersdon's worldly and material success? There is good reason to suppose that we are, particularly since the inscription tells us that he was a canon of St George's

[34] Saul, *Death, Art, and Memory*, 114–17.

[35] For an eloquent plea for greater dialogue between historians, architectural historians and archaeologists, see R. Allen Brown's Inaugural Lecture, 'Too Many Mansions', in his *Castles, Conquest and Charters: Collected Papers* (Woodbridge, 1989), 370–87.

Chapel, Windsor. Yet the evidence of the brass only takes us so far. A case could be argued that the real key to an understanding of Mersdon's career is held not by the brass but by the documentary sources for his life. Without an analysis of the body of sources which tells us about Mersdon's further appointments and connections, the picture given by the brass is incomplete. The brass, for example, tells us nothing about his connections with the long-lived Elizabeth of Juliers, countess of Kent, evidently a patron.

There is no wholly satisfactory solution to the problem of methodology, for the precise balance between monument and context will vary from case to case. There is no doubt that a knowledge of the social and cultural context of a monument can enrich our understanding of that monument and assist in locating sources of tension and contradiction within it. What is usually more difficult to establish is the performative role of the monument—that is, its role in the construction and structuring of social and religious relationships. One possible solution is to think in terms of a relationship of mutuality, of a complex interplay of ideas and influences between the monument and society, with monuments playing a role in shaping contemporary realities while at the same time being shaped by them. We can take, for example, the great heraldic displays on some late medieval knightly tombs, such as that of Reginald, Lord Cobham (d. 1361) at Lingfield (Fig. 52). These displays, consisting of the blazons of men who forged ties of brotherhood on the battlefields of France, afford evidence both of the strength of contemporary chivalric feeling and of the role which that sentiment played in shaping commemorative taste. Yet the creation and assembling of the armorials also attests something else: the role which the monuments themselves played in affirming and legitimizing status—in other words, in structuring social relationships. The armorials on the tomb chests are illustrative of the monument's function as both a bearer and creator of social realities.

Yet there are very different contexts in which the monument can be seen more clearly as just the bearer of truth. An obvious instance is provided by the grisly *transi* or cadaver monuments of the late Middle Ages. The only way of explaining these extraordinary creations is by looking at developments in contemporary religious and artistic expression to see how these could have influenced and encouraged the cult of the macabre. There is no simple or mechanistic solution to the problem of the relationship between monuments and social reality. The problem here is not, of course, one unique to the study of monuments; it is encountered in the contextual study of any art form, whether visual or otherwise. The approach adopted in this book will be to emphasize the variety of interaction afforded by monuments. The precise form of the interactions, it will be shown, is apt to vary according to circumstance and time.

The structure and arrangement of the book are both reasonably straightforward. The book opens with a discussion of the monuments of the pre-Conquest period, an era whose monuments have generally been overlooked in synoptic treatments of the subject. It then proceeds to a consideration of the chronological and geographical distribution of monuments and an assessment of the scale of post-medieval losses. The next two chapters consider the organization of monument

production and the operation of the market in bringing patron and producer together. A discussion of the main functions of monuments then follows, with the emphasis placed on the role of the monument in assisting strategies for salvation and proclaiming and attesting the deceased's status. After this, an analysis of the visual qualities of monuments identifies the principal components of the monument and indicates how these helped to articulate its messages to the beholder. A series of three chapters examines the main classes of effigial monument as defined by rank—clerical, knightly, and civilian—showing how each incorporated and reflected the self-image of the commemorated while at the same time performing a role in promoting worldly aspirations. The monuments of women and men of law, and *transi* or cadaver monuments are each accorded attention in a series of later chapters. A final chapter looks at the textual discourse on monuments, exploring its character and meaning, and suggesting what can be learned about the construction of the social identity of the commemorated.

2

Commemoration in Early Medieval England

The origins of medieval sepulchral commemoration in England are to be found deep in the Anglo-Saxon period. As early as the late ninth century in some parts of England grave markers were being produced in what amounted to industrial quantities. The scale of funerary commemoration in pre-Conquest England can easily be underestimated. The great majority of early grave slabs are poorly preserved: many, indeed, are barely recognizable as grave slabs at all. Only from the mid-twelfth century do funerary monuments survive in reasonable enough condition as to catch the eye. Yet there can be no doubting the existence of a widely disseminated Christian commemorative culture well before the Conquest. By the tenth century the output of grave slabs, relative to the size of the population, reached levels close to those reached in the boom years of the thirteenth century.

For all the evidence of continuity in the practice of commemoration, however, it is important to recognize that significant changes took place in the honouring of the dead between the eleventh century and the thirteenth. In the first place, there was a shift in the geography of burial, and thus in the geography of commemoration. Before the eleventh century the burials of non-royal layfolk had almost invariably been extra-mural; after this time there was a move to burial within the church. Simultaneously, there was a change in the character of monuments. In the early Middle Ages tomb slabs had mostly been non-effigial, and decoration had taken a geometric or other abstract form. From the mid-twelfth century effigies in the likeness of the deceased were being commissioned—initially for elite monuments, and later for a wider class of patron. Between them, these two developments were to transform the character of commemoration in English—and European—churches. Before their implications are considered, however, it is necessary to look in more detail at the scale and character of commemoration in England before the Conquest.

THE EARLIEST ENGLISH FUNERARY SCULPTURE

The beginnings of the tradition of Christian funerary commemoration are to be found in the seventh and eighth centuries. In the mainly pagan early Settlement period burials had usually been made in big cemeteries away from human habitation and in dominant and highly visible positions. At Sutton Hoo (Suffolk), for example, a major high-status cemetery stood on a bluff looking out over the estuary of the

River Deben. Typically, display took the form of burying of goods below ground, not of the erection of a monument above. From the later seventh century, however, a series of changes took place, largely although not entirely associated with the coming of Christianity. A sharp decline occurred in the use of grave goods while, at the same time, burials were increasingly concentrated in churchyards. In most of England public and communal funerary rituals came to be played out above ground in the provision and articulation of funerary monuments.

By the mid-Saxon period there was already a wide variety of monument types which served both to commemorate the dead and make public statements about them. For the wealthy there were stone crosses, grave slabs, grave markers, and name stones. For the less well off there were wooden grave markers, which were probably once far more common than their counterparts in stone.[1]

The largest number of surviving crosses and grave markers of early to mid-Saxon date are to be found in the north of England. It is not altogether clear why the pattern of distribution so heavily favours the north over the south. One reason may be that the extensive rebuildings of the late Middle Ages in southern and eastern England took a heavy toll of early monuments. On the other hand, the rich survivals may simply be an indication of the high level of cultural attainment in Golden Age Northumbria. Only in the tenth century does the pattern of distribution begin to even out, with increasing evidence of commemoration coming from other parts of the country.

The most remarkable examples of the sculptor's art from the early Middle Ages are the magnificent stone crosses which are a feature of the northern landscape. There can be little doubt that the main purpose of these crosses was to act as symbols of Christianity and as focal points for preaching. In the case of the minority, however, which carry inscriptions mentioning a person, it is reasonable to suppose that a secondary function was commemorative: the cross served as a sculptural *liber vitae*. A good example of such a cross is provided by the shaft at Hackness (Yorks.), which is carved with a series of runic and Latin inscriptions referring to an Abbess Oedilburga (Æthelburh), probably the superior of Whitby's dependent house there.[2] Crosses inscribed with personal names also survive at Thornhill (Yorks.), Bewcastle (Cumbria), and Monkwearmouth and Jarrow (Co. Durham). It is likely, to judge from their weathered state, that most of these features stood outside. A few, however, were probably set up inside the church. A good example is provided by the magnificent cross at Hexham associated with Acca, the eighth-century bishop of that diocese, which probably stood over his grave.[3] At Whitby is a series of stele inscribed with personal names which, to judge from their lack of weathering, may have been set up inside.

[1] Evidence for the marking of graves in wood has been found at Thwing (Yorks.): D. M. Hadley, *Death in Medieval England: An Archaeology* (Stroud, 2001), 128.

[2] J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), 145–6. J. Lang, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, III: *York and Eastern Yorkshire* (Oxford, 1991), 135–40, suggests Æthelburga, abbess of Lyminge, and widow of King Edwin of Northumbria.

[3] R. Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, I: *County Durham and Northumberland* (2 vols., Oxford, 1984), i. 174–6; ii plates 168–71.

In pre-Viking England probably the most frequently used commemorative form was the grave slab or grave marker. In many cases the two types appear to have been laid together, the marker acting as a headstone by the grave slab. Where a marker survives without a slab, however, it might have stood alone. A large number of these grave markers are plain, lacking both decoration and epitaph.

In northern England the most remarkable series of grave markers is that of seventh- to ninth-century date excavated in a cemetery beneath York Minster. These stones are all inscribed: they carry the name of the deceased, and may well have been erected above the graves of those whom they commemorated.[4] In one case, the wording is almost identical to that encountered in the late Middle Ages: 'Here [beneath this?] turf [or tomb?] rest the [remains?] of Wulfhere'. The quality of carving of the fragments is uneven, which suggests that a number of hands were at work. One of the markers was found *in situ* above a grave; the others, however, had been reused as building material or, in a couple of cases, as parts of a composite stone coffin. The lack of weathering of the stones has encouraged speculation that they may originally have been displayed within a building. The high interest in textual matter is paralleled on contemporary monuments in the monastic churches at Hartlepool, Monkwearmouth, and Jarrow.[5] Most monuments in the region do not bear inscriptions. The clear implication is that the York Minster stele and the monuments in the various monasteries were made for a literate, most probably for an ecclesiastical, elite.

In southern England there is less evidence of pre-Viking commemoration than there is in the north. The two earliest commemorative sculptures appear to be the stones from Sandwich, now preserved in the Royal Museum at Canterbury. These are both of square section with a flat upper end, and taper towards the bottom. From their roughly dressed character it is evident that the lower ends were inserted into the ground while the upper ends were left exposed; in other words, the stones acted as grave markers. One of the stones is panelled on two faces, while the other has a runic inscription which has been read by some as a personal name. The archaic design and the absence of Christian symbolism together point to a date of perhaps the seventh century.

FUNERARY SCULPTURE IN THE MID-SAXON PERIOD

By the mid-ninth century considerable variety was to be found in the commemorative sculpture produced in much of England. The variety was probably greatest in the north. Here monuments might take the form of upright crosses, recumbent slabs, or hogbacks (house-shaped stones); they might be set up alone or be accompanied by headstones and footstones; decoration could be abstract, or incorporate plant, animal, or human ornament. Inscriptions, where included,

[4] Lang, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, III. 62–6.
[5] Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, I. i. 97–101, 123–4, 110–13 respectively.

might be in Latin or English, in Roman or runic alphabets. Over time, as levels of output increased, standardization was to set in, and motifs became repetitive. In the ninth century, however, in most localities diversity was still apparent.

A notable feature of the grave furniture of this period is the religious ambivalence of so much of its sculpture. Relatively little of it is explicitly Christian. On many slabs the subject matter is predominantly zoomorphic in character. A series of stones excavated beneath York Minster are decorated with the exotic motif of a winged beast—a maned biped with antecedents in pre-Viking English sculpture. 'Wyrm' imagery is often present, stones being decorated with dragons, snakes, maggots, and other creatures which devour the body, evoking the idea of damnation. On cross shafts 'pagan' scenes depicting the imagery of Norse mythology were popular. The figure of Weland, the flying smith, was carved at the bottom of a cross shaft at Leeds (Yorks.). Warrior imagery was also common on cross shafts. On an example at Middleton (Yorks.) the image of an armed man with his weapons occupies one side, while a dragon entangled in his body is featured on the back.

It is tempting to see the emergence of this strongly masculine, semi-pagan imagery as reflecting the arrival of Scandinavian influence in England. It is noticeable that its emergence coincides with the late ninth-century Viking colonization of northern and eastern England. Yet, despite the Nordic affinities, it is probably wrong to interpret the imagery too strongly or exclusively in a pagan context. In didactic terms its character can be seen as multivalent. Although the artistic forms may be non-Christian, they are often employed in such a way as to assist in communicating the Christian message. On the Leeds cross-shaft the figure of Weland sits in an artistic sequence with images of evangelists and ecclesiastics, birds and winged beasts. It is possible that a parallel was intended between the Weland story and the image of St John with his eagle. On a cross at Nunburnholme (Yorks.) (Fig. 1) a seated man with a sword and helmet was shown (in the cross's original arrangement) above a similar figure, probably a priest, also seated and holding a rectangular object, probably a book. It is possible that a visual analogy was being set up between the two men's accessories. Ælfric's pastoral letters reiterated the idea, widely held, that a priest's books were his spiritual weapons. Later, a carving of the heroic figure Sigurd was added to the sculpture, partly obliterating the figure of the priest. According to the Norse legend, Sigurd killed a dragon and after tasting its blood learned of the treacherous plans of his stepfather Reginn. It is possible that a reference was being made in the sculpture to the imagery of the eucharist: in each case enlightenment came through consumption of blood, in the one case the dragon's blood and in the other the miraculously changed wine of the Host.[6]

The greater part of the stone sculpture of northern England in these years is now thought to have been conceived in a principally Christian milieu. If the ecclesiastical authorities did not actually control its production, they may still

[6] V. Thompson, *Dying and Death in Later Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2004), 151. For detailed discussion of the Nunburnholme cross, a complex product and the work of two main sculptors, see Lang, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, III. 189–93.

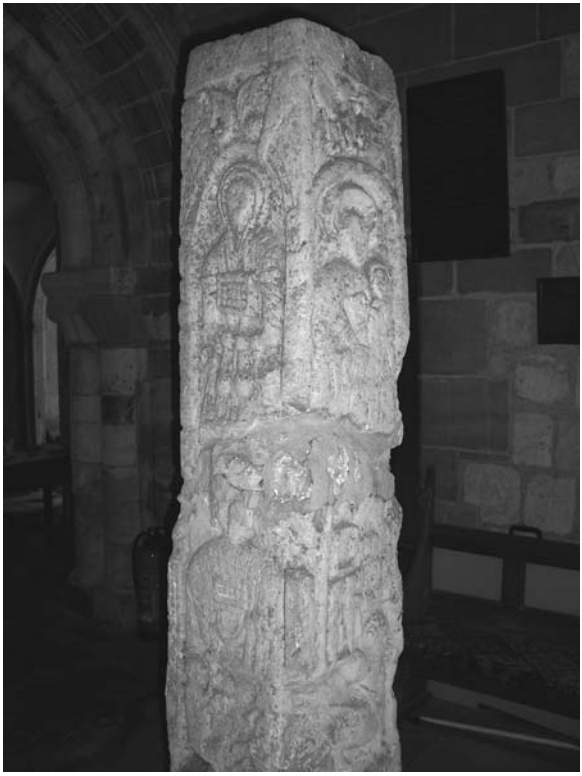

Figure 1. Nunburnholme (Yorks.): cross shaft, probably ninth century

have exercised influence in the choice of imagery. The ambivalence of the subject matter gives every impression of having been deliberate. The Church was striving to impart its core message to a conservative and, in some cases, a pagan or recently pagan upper class. On cross shafts it made perfect sense to place the secular and spiritual imagery together so as to suggest parallels between the secular subjects and the essentials of Christian teaching. It is highly unlikely that the parallels went unnoticed. Northern England at this time was peopled by a population which, though of mixed background and religion, shared a common cultural and symbolic language. 'Wyrm' imagery, warrior figures, and heroic and zoomorphic art all embraced both secular and spiritual interpretations. That, indeed, was part of the repertory's attraction. If a dragon—a mythical beast—could be seen by viewers as the devil of the Book of the Revelation, that made it all the more suitable for inclusion on a gravestone. Ninth- and tenth-century grave sculpture represented an attempt by the Church to harness the resources of a powerful lay aristocratic culture to the needs of a new, but not entirely alien, Christian culture of salvation.

FUNERARY SCULPTURE IN THE LATE SAXON PERIOD

Until the ninth century the bulk of the evidence for the development of funerary sculpture comes from northern England. In the south there is little indication of a demand for grave stones comparable with that in the culturally more advanced kingdom of Northumbria. In the later Saxon period, however, the evidence of commemoration in the midland and southern counties becomes more plentiful. For the first time, there are signs of a sizeable market emerging south of the Trent, in particular in Lincolnshire and the east Midlands. Simultaneously, a major shift of emphasis occurred in the iconography of tomb sculpture. In place of the heroic and zoomorphic imagery of earlier years, a stronger emphasis was placed on the cross as the central instrument of salvation.

In many ways the most remarkable monument of the mid-Saxon period is the semi-effigial slab at Whitchurch (Hants) (Fig. 2). This commemorates a lady of the

Figure 2. Whitchurch (Hants): monument of Frithburga, late ninth century

name Frithburga and is probably of late ninth-century date.[7] The slab represents something of a turning point in the history of monumental sculpture in southern England. In the first place, it is significant for the novelty of its design. In place of the tapering sides and flat upper end, the hallmark of the Sandwich stones, it has parallel sides and a semicircular head. Around the outer edge of the head, so as to be legible when the stone was set in the ground, is the following inscription: '+HIC CO[RPU]S [F]RI[DB]URG[AE REQ]UIE[SC]IT IN PACE [S]EPULTUM' ('here rests the body of Frithburga buried in peace'). Second, and more remarkably, the slab's explicitly Christian iconography broke new ground. In the semicircular recess is the half-length figure of Christ, identifiable by his cruciform nimbus. His right arm is raised in blessing, while in his left arm he holds aloft a book.

Nowhere in southern England is there an antecedent to the Whitchurch slab or even a close parallel to it. Stylistically, the piece seems to stand alone in the funerary sculpture of the mid-Saxon period. It is well executed and stylistically accomplished, showing a confident handling of the component parts. It shares with some of the richer grave slabs of seventh- and eighth-century Northumbria a strong interest in textual discourse. Where it represents a new departure is in its employment of specifically Christocentric figure sculpture. From the turn of the ninth and the tenth centuries, particularly in southern England, a new interest was to be shown in the use of Christian symbolism in funerary art. Over time, particularly after the absorption of the Danelaw, the more ambivalent artistic language of the Northumbrian grave markers was to find itself pushed to one side. An artistic language with the Christian message of salvation at its heart was to take its place.

If a growing interest was taken in explicitly Christian symbolism, however, it was not in figure sculpture that it was to find its most characteristic expression; rather, it was to be in the more generalized adoption of the cross motif. In northern England the cross had long featured in the imagery of grave slabs alongside non-Christian heroic and zoomorphic motifs. Sometimes, indeed, as we have seen, standing crosses of Hiberno-Norse design had acted as monuments in their own right. On funerary sculpture of tenth-century date and later, however, the cross was to be accorded far greater prominence than had been the case before. Supporting imagery was pared down, paving the way for the emergence of a leaner, more austere artistic style. Other than on coped tomb chests, where narrative sequences continued to feature, the emphasis was firmly on the cross as the central symbol of personal salvation.

What lay behind this new emphasis on Christian imagery? In part, the answer is to be found in the distinctive cultural ambience of southern England. The sculptors of Wessex, the main southern kingdom, had a strong sense of their role as defenders of the Christian artistic tradition—a sense which had been instilled in them by Alfred and his successors in the Viking wars. To this background, not only did the cross have the attraction of giving clear visible expression to the values

[7] D. Tweddle, M. Biddle, B. Kjolbye-Biddle, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, IV: *South-East England* (Oxford, 1995), 271–2.

which the Wessex men were defending; its more extensive use could be associated with the expansion of Wessex power which Edward the Elder and Æthelstan were to achieve in the tenth century. The process of dissemination into former Viking territory is illustrated by the imagery of a remarkable slab excavated at Cambridge and probably produced in that town. At the head of the slab is a unique motif representing the keys of the kingdom and the cross in one. It has been suggested that the motif is to be associated with the iconography of St Peter's keys in the Benedictional of St Æthelwold, produced at Winchester.[8] If this was the case, then a vivid insight is afforded into the dissemination in eastern England of ideas which had their origins in the Wessex heartland.

When a major iconographic change of this kind occurs, it is tempting to establish a connection not only with immediate circumstances, but with larger religious and cultural changes in society. In this instance, it is possible to suggest a connection with a major shift in contemporary religion, the growing acceptance by the Church of the value of intercessory prayer. It had long been a central Christian belief that the souls of the dead would be tried, tested, and refined in purgatory before admission to the kingdom of heaven. By the tenth century, however, a further notion was winning more widespread acceptance—that the passage of those souls could be speeded or assisted by the prayers of the living. Once the need for such intercessory assistance was admitted, it became necessary to find a means by which the living could be prompted to such action. The presence of the cross on the tomb slab provided the most obvious and convenient means of achieving this. It helped make the slab a focal point for the prayerful attentions of the priest and passers-by. With the increase in the liturgical significance of the tomb, there was correspondingly a gradual but significant weakening of its importance as a witness to status. It would be wrong to place too strong an emphasis on this shift in the balance of function. The tomb slab was still an important mark of status; a person's ability to commission a stone necessarily marked him out as a person of standing. None the less, with the higher priority now accorded to the cross as a spur to intercession, artistically the claims of the world to come took precedence over those of the present.

Simple grave slabs, most of them with crosses, were being produced in great number from the tenth and eleventh centuries. Well over a hundred slabs of roughly this date were discovered at Bakewell (Derby.), when the south transept was rebuilt in 1841.[9] In the pre-Conquest period a group of substantial workshops have been identified as operating in the east Midlands.[10] The products of all of these schools are internally homogeneous, pointing to centralized production on a near-industrial scale. The most accomplished of the group was the one based

[8] C. Fox, 'Anglo-Saxon Monumental Sculpture in the Cambridge District', *Proc. of the Cambridge Antiquarian Soc.* 17 (1920–1), 15–45, at 32.

[9] F. C. Plumptre, 'Some Account of the Parish Church of Bakewell in Derbyshire', *Archaeological Jnl.* 4 (1847), at 47–58.

[10] Fox, 'Anglo-Saxon Monumental Sculpture in the Cambridge District'; P. Everson and D. Stocker, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, V: *Lincolnshire* (Oxford, 1999), 36–57.

in the Kesteven district of Lincolnshire. About 47 of its products have been identified. These are all thick, almost square in section, their decoration consisting of double-ended crosses embedded in panels of interlace. Fifteen of the stones have a bull's head motif, probably a mason's signature. Their shape and dimensions suggest that they were intended to resemble the rectangular chest coffins produced at York. The characteristics of the mid-Kesteven package—crosses, standardized iconography, evocation of the coffin—all point to ecclesiastical supervision of the output.

The second of the east Midlands schools appears to have been based in or near Cambridge. Some 64 of its products have been identified in Lincolnshire, the Fens, east Midlands, and East Anglia. Again, the consistency of the iconography points to central supervision of production. The slabs were generally severe in treatment, their decoration consisting of a cross set to the background of a simple interlace design. The unique keys motif on the slab excavated on the site of Cambridge castle points to strong ecclesiastical supervision of design, as in Kesteven. Victoria Thompson has suggested the possible involvement of the bishops of Lindsey.[11] The third and last of the east Midlands workshops was the smallest—a workshop based at or near Lincoln whose products, characterized by repetitive interlace decoration, were confined to north Lincolnshire.

Towards the end of the eleventh century all three east Midlands workshops appear to have ceased production. Well before this time, however, a range of other producers had entered the market, notably the prolific workshops based at the Barnack quarries. The Barnack carvers were to be the dominant producers of grave slabs for the Midlands and East Anglian markets for the next two to three centuries. Their products are easily identifiable by their use of the familiar double omega motif on the vertical stem of the cross (Fig. 8). In other parts of the Midlands, workshops have been identified at Bakewell in the Peak District and, on a smaller scale, at Colsterworth (Lincs.). Assigning precise dates to monuments of this period is difficult, not to say almost impossible. In all but a few cases the monuments lack inscriptions; and, when an inscription is included, as at Stratfield Mortimer (Fig. 3), it is usually without a date of death for the deceased. In most cases dating can only be undertaken by reference to the techniques of stylistic analysis. On the basis of comparisons with architectural and other sculpture, Laurence Butler has identified a range of cross-head designs which, in his view, may be dated to the twelfth century. He has dubbed these designs 'Early Geometric'. Most are of discoid form—for example, the Greek cross within a circle, found at Biddulph (Staffs.), the cross paté in a circle, at Halifax (Yorks.), and the cross head of four circles, at Pentrich (Staffs.).[12] Over the century from *c.*1140 the design of cross heads became more elaborate. Among the forms most commonly encountered in the Midlands are 'bracelet' heads of four open rings ending in buds, and more ornate forms adorned with sprigs. Dates can only be assigned to these early monuments in very

[11] Thompson, *Dying and Death*, 128.

[12] L. A. S. Butler, 'Minor Medieval Monumental Sculpture in the East Midlands', *Archaeological Jnl.* 121 (1965), 115.

broad terms. Indeed, when so few examples are firmly dated, and dating is made by reference to other examples, arguments for dating can easily become circular.

What sorts of people were commemorated by these slabs? Unfortunately, in the great majority of cases very few clues are afforded to the identity of the deceased. The dominance before the eleventh century of secular and heroic imagery points to a clientele drawn in that period largely from the aristocratic class. The likeliest hypothesis is that those commemorated comprised principally ealdormen and wealthy thegns. Conceivably, there was also a scattering of bishops and abbots—many of whom would themselves have been of aristocratic background. By the later tenth and eleventh centuries, however, the growing scale of commemoration points to a significant widening of the patron class. With the break-up of the great estates of earlier times and the formation of many smaller units of landownership, a stimulus was given to the emergence of a class of lesser proprietors—the men who would later comprise the gentry. It is probably from landowners at this level, men of thegnly status, that most of the new patrons were drawn. Æthelweard son of Cypping, who is commemorated by the eleventh-century slab at Stratfield Mortimer (Berks.) may be typical of their number (Fig. 3).[13] In 1086 Cypping is recorded as holding manors with six churches in Berkshire and Hampshire.[14]

It is likely that a connection can also be made with the changes in ecclesiastical organization which took place at this time. For the greater part of the pre-Conquest period the pastoral work of the Church had been performed by teams of clergy attached to minster churches—churches, that is, which served a wide hinterland. Between the tenth and the twelfth centuries, however, the minster system gradually broke down as a result of pressures from below. Local proprietors seeking a religious dimension to their lordship built chapels of their own, leaving the minsters without a role. Over time these chapels acquired their own dependent cemeteries. When this happened, those who had created them sought burial there, and their places of interment were marked by gravestones.

A characteristic of the pattern of geographical distribution of tenth- and eleventh-century gravestones is its sharply different character from the pattern of the early Saxon years. Before the tenth century, as we have seen, the bulk of extant funerary sculpture had been created in the north. In the period from the tenth century to the twelfth the greatest concentrations of stones are found along the eastern edge of the limestone belt, in particular in Kesteven, Lindsey, and the Fens. Across Lincolnshire, some 15 per cent of all medieval churches have sculpture fragments of this date; around Sleaford the proportion rises to as high as two-thirds.[15] By contrast, relatively few concentrations are found either in northern England with its once rich sculptural tradition or in central Wessex. It is reasonable to suppose that, where grave markers of this date survive in some number in a church, the church concerned had a cemetery. In other words, a connection is to be presumed between the spread of grave markers and the gradual disintegration of the minster

[13] Tweddle, Biddle, Kjolbye-Biddle, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, IV. 335–7.
[14] Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 470. [15] Ibid. 468.

Figure 3. Stratfield Mortimer (Berks.): monument of Æthelweard son of Cypping, later eleventh century

system. It seems that a consequence of the gradual erosion of minster burial rights was a growth of physical commemoration in the setting of a chapel cemetery.

To say this is not to suggest that the tradition of burial in the old minsters ceased entirely; there is little indication that this was the case. The minsters were still the destination of much of the sculptors' output. Indeed, there is a clear tendency for

many of the larger groups of post-900 slabs and crosses to be found at major pre-Viking sites. Bakewell (Derby.), Lowther (Westm.), and Lindisfarne (Northumb.) are to be numbered among the more obvious examples; in Lincolnshire almost 40 per cent of surviving later pieces are at minsters. Some of these monuments would have commemorated clergy; a good number of them, however, would have commemorated layfolk. Clearly minster burial still held its attractions, particularly to older families with ancestral connections with these churches. Many patrons probably felt a degree of tension between a traditional allegiance to a minster church and the desire to establish a new mausoleum which would set the seal on their territorial lordship. On the eve of the Conquest, however, the signs are that it was the latter instinct which was triumphing over the former.

COMMEMORATION AFTER THE NORMAN CONQUEST

The years just before and after the Norman Conquest witnessed a remarkable building boom in England. Not only were a great many new churches or chapels built by prosperous and ambitious manorial proprietors; existing wooden churches were reconstructed in grander and more permanent form in stone.

It has recently been suggested that this 'great rebuilding' could have had an impact on the commissioning of funerary monuments in England. In a study of funerary sculpture in the North Riding of Yorkshire, A. N. McClain has pointed to a sharp decline in the production of monuments in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, just when church building was reaching its peak.[16] Surprisingly, only 34 cross slabs survive in the North Riding from this period compared with no fewer than 376 monuments of all types from the century and a half before. Further research is needed before the hypothesis of an eleventh- and twelfth-century dip in production can be accepted for the country as a whole. Quite possibly, William the Conqueror's harrying of the North in 1070 ate into the resources available for commemoration in much of north and east Yorkshire. There may, however, be something to be said for the idea that the building of bigger and more permanent churches contributed to making physical commemoration redundant. Patrons could have seen large stone-built churches as communicating messages about the power and wealth of their builders more effectively than the placing of grave markers in a churchyard. Indeed, it is not inconceivable that the towers of these big new churches were themselves called on to play a role in the liturgies of burial. P. Everson and D. Stocker, in an analysis of late eleventh-century church towers in Lincolnshire, have suggested that the ground floors of these towers were called on to serve, in effect, as mortuary chapels. On the night before the burial of the body, it is argued, the coffin was placed under the tower for the performance of the vigil

[16] A. N. McClain, 'Patronage, Power and Identity: The Social Use of Local Churches and Commemorative Monuments in Tenth- to Twelfth-Century North Yorkshire' (University of York Ph.D. thesis, 2006), 184–5, 209.

liturgy, before being taken out on the following day for burial in the churchyard as the bells tolled above.[17]

Whether or not it can be established that there was a dip in monument production in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, in the longer term the trend in the use of monuments was definitely upwards. Even in north Yorkshire in the late twelfth century the number of monuments commissioned rose sharply. A number of factors are likely to have contributed to this growth.

The first, and perhaps the most important, was the wave of monastic foundations which followed the Conquest and stretched into the twelfth century. The Norman knightly class, following the practice of their ancestors in the duchy, sought burial in monasteries rather than, as the English generally had, in minsters and parish churches. In many cases in Norman England the monastery served as the spiritual centre of the new feudal honours, the place where honorial memory was preserved in cartularies, bede rolls, and tombstones. Monasteries held a particular attraction to the laity as burial places because of the monks' ability to offer uninterrupted intercession, a service which parish churches, lacking institutional permanence, could only rarely provide. By the twelfth century, burial in monastic surroundings was sought not only by those closest to the community—the founder, his immediate kin, and descendants—but by those at a remove: the honorial baronage and lesser knightly tenants. When donors made gifts of land or money to monastic houses, it was almost invariably the privilege of burial in the cloister which they sought as their reward.[18] The boom in monastic foundations may, in this way, have given a spur to production of the simple cross slabs over graves which are so characteristic a feature of the commemorative art of the period. Many examples of such slabs have been uncovered in excavations of twelfth-century monastic ruins.

A second, and related, factor contributed to the demand for monuments in the twelfth century, and this was the trend towards intra-mural burial. In the period before the Conquest virtually all burials had been made extra mural, in the cemeteries which adjoined churches. The interior of the church had the character of a sacred space, the sanctity of which was not to be violated. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, however, mainly under pressure from the clergy, the ancient conventions began to break down. As early as 813, by a decree of the Council of Mainz, certain limited groups—bishops, abbots, and 'fideles laici' (kings, princes, and patrons)—had been conceded the privilege of burial inside churches.[19] In England, in the short term, there is no indication that much advantage was taken of this concession by the permitted ranks; or at least, if pressure was indeed exerted,

[17] P. Everson and D. Stocker, 'The Common Steeple? Church, Liturgy and Settlement in Early Medieval Lincolnshire', in C. P. Lewis (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies*, XXVIII (Woodbridge, 2006), 103–23.

[18] A grant to Westminster Abbey by one George de Saunford was made very precisely on the condition that the monks provide a tomb for his uncle, Thomas: Westminster Abbey Muniments, Muniment Book 11, fo. 563^{v}.

[19] C. Wilson, 'The Medieval Monuments', in P. Collinson, N. Ramsay, M. Sparks (eds.), *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), 453 n.

it was resisted by the authorities.[20] Only in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries did a major shift occur in the geography of burial. However, the shift, when it came, was substantial: by the twelfth century increasing numbers of the secular and ecclesiastical elites were being buried in churches, or on the thresholds of churches. The attractions of burial *intra muros* were essentially twofold. First, those to whom the privilege was granted—the rich, the well born, and the well connected—were afforded a means of giving visible expression to their status: they found in burial a way of reproducing in death the separation of the ranks of society in life. Second, and perhaps more important, burial inside offered a means of enhancing the benefits of intercession. A tomb placed within sight of where the priest officiated stood a much better chance of attracting his attention than one placed in a corner of a cemetery.

For both these reasons, intra-mural burial was a privilege much sought after by the twelfth century. The ecclesiastical authorities, however, faced with a challenge to the coherent planning of church interiors, were by no means inclined simply to accede to the pressure. In monastic communities there was considerable resistance to allowing burial within the church itself. The usual convention was for the abbot, senior monks, the founder, and others of high rank to be buried in the chapter house, with only saints or other persons of exemplary life buried in the church. By the later twelfth century, however, the barriers of resistance were beginning to break down. Not only was the privilege of burial in monastic precincts conceded to a wider patron class; permission was granted more readily for burial in the church itself. A breach had been made in the barriers of informal clerical control. It was a breach which was to grow steadily wider in the course of the thirteenth century as pressure from the wealthy for burial in sacred space increased still further.

THE RISE OF EFFIGIAL SCULPTURE

One consequence of the growing popularity of intra-mural burial was to give a stimulus to the development of funerary monuments as an artistic genre. Safely accommodated in church interiors, monuments could be made larger and iconographically more complex. The repertory of emblematic motifs was expanded, while experiments were made with new kinds of monument, which would lead to a revolution in the overall character of the tomb. In general, a closer relationship was explored between architecture and tomb sculpture than had been possible before.

The new trends were most immediately apparent in the production of the familiar cross slabs. Cross-head designs now became more elaborate. By the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries attractive leaf-like forms were introduced. On a slab at Halifax (Yorks.) the arms of a cross paté are cut into the shape of a crude fleur de lys. On other slabs the arms of the cross are given multilobed acanthus

[20] It is possible that those of high status built stone mausolea in minster cemeteries: Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, 243.

leaves as terminals.[21] By the late thirteenth century a standardized foliated cross head was being produced by the London sculptors. Typically, this took the form of a clustered terminal made up of a group of three separate trefoils. On some slabs the foliage became organic and rampant, spreading all over the surface. At Studley (War.) a foliated head and leafy branches grow out of the top of the shaft, while at Middleton Tyas (Yorks.) trails of six-lobed leaves spring from its sides.[22] On a slab in Hereford Cathedral the foliage sprouting from the shaft envelops the whole surface producing an effect akin to the interlace pattern of pre-Conquest sculpture (Fig. 4). At the same time, there was a growing appetite for the representation of the trappings of status on slabs. In northern England it became common to place symbols indicative of estate or profession on each side of the cross shaft.[23]

Figure 4. Hereford Cathedral: cross slab grave cover, later thirteenth century

[21] P. Ryder, *Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in West Yorkshire* (Wakefield: West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, 1991), 49–60.

[22] B. Kemp, *English Church Monuments* (London, 1980), 15, 17.

[23] L. A. S. Butler, 'Symbols on Medieval Memorials', *Archaeological Jnl.* 144 (1987), 246–55.

The symbols most commonly represented were chalices and books for priests, and swords for members of the knightly class. Hunting horns were sometimes depicted for foresters and keys for office-holders. On monuments to women, shears were used as symbols of female identity. The self-consciousness of the knightly class found expression in the more frequent use of coats of arms and, later, crests.

The new directions in monumental sculpture, however, found their clearest expression in the emergence of an entirely new type of monument—the sculpted effigy. It was in the twelfth century that the sculpted human figure, to become so familiar later, first made its appearance.

The arrival of the effigial monument marked an important turning-point in the English sculptural tradition. In Anglo-Saxon England, as we have seen, funerary sculpture had generally taken non-figural form. Designs had typically been abstract—foliage trails, interlace patterns, grotesques and other motifs drawn mostly from northern sources. Figures, where they had appeared, formed part of biblical scenes; they were not representations of the deceased. On the continent, by contrast, in the early Middle Ages tomb sculpture continued to bear the imprint of classical Roman models. Effigial sculpture was still intermittently employed, and representations of the deceased were sometimes included in designs. It would be wrong to suggest that the figural tradition flourished vigorously in continental funerary art; none the less, after a fashion it lingered on.

The achievement of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries was to bring the effigial tradition back into the funerary mainstream. The earliest extant effigial monument is one of the most remarkable—the cast bronze effigy of Rudolf, duke of Swabia, the Emperor Henry IV's rival, in Merseburg Cathedral, Germany. Executed within a decade or two of the duke's death in 1080, this stands out for its artistic maturity and quality of execution.[24] From the period after *c.*1130 there survive a number of other impressive effigies. In Germany there are the figures of Duke Widukind (*c.*1130) at Enger, and Archbishop Frederick of Wettin (d. 1152) and a successor of his at Magdeburg. In France there was once a fine series of effigies at the abbeys of St-Victor, Paris, St-Pierre-le-Vif, Sens, and St-Benigne, Dijon. These are all now lost but are known to us from the drawings made for Gaignières.[25]

The context for this aesthetic revolution is to be found in the humanistic thought of the twelfth century. In the works of the leading twelfth-century theologians a new emphasis was placed on the humanity of God; the Almighty, so often in the past seen as a remote and terrifying figure, was now seen as accessible, a presence animating every human being. As a result, mankind was invested with a new dignity and a new nature. No longer was man (or woman) conceived as a fallen creature, impotent and dependent on supernatural aid; instead he or she was seen as having the power to reason and to understand the will of God. This new, more positive view of the potentiality of humankind found expression in the artistic achievements

[24] T. E. A. Dale, 'The Individual, the Resurrected Body and Romanesque Portraiture: The Tomb of Rudolf von Schwaben at Merseburg', *Speculum*, 77 (2002), 707–43.

[25] *Les Tombeaux de la Collection Gaignières*, ed. J. Adhémar (2 vols., Paris, 1974, 1976), i. 11–14.

of the period. Figure and effigial sculpture made the human physiognomy more life-like and invested it with greater dignity. The 'pillar people' on the western portals of Chartres are not the writhing, contorted figures of an age preoccupied with the struggle for survival; instead, they are human likenesses possessed of dignity and refinement. As Kenneth Clark wrote, their serenity marks a stage in the ascent of man.[26] When, as in the next generation, the saints were portrayed on the transept portals at Chartres, they were shown as friendly mediators with whom the faithful could identify and to whom they could turn for intercession.

The close relation between architecture and sculpture meant that the new figural iconography was quickly integrated into the repertory of funerary art. The first effigies of the new type were commissioned in the areas of Europe most deeply touched by the change of sensibility—principally, northern France and Germany. England was hardly in the forefront of the aesthetic advance; in English art, the Romanesque idiom remained strong well into the 1160s. None the less, English patrons were eager to catch up. By the second or third quarters of the century the more cosmopolitan of them were commissioning effigies in the new style. For the most part, these patrons were high-ranking bishops and abbots, with wide connections both at home and abroad. The rich network of ties linking the English and Continental elites when the Angevins' power was at its height helped alert them to the possibilities of the new style.

It has been suggested that the freestone figure of an abbot, perhaps originally in Bath Abbey, and now at Bathampton (Som.), may rank as the earliest surviving effigial monument in England (Fig. 5).[27] This figure, now on an outside wall, can be dated on stylistic grounds to the third or fourth decade of the twelfth century. What is not clear is whether its purpose was actually commemorative. In appearance, it has something of the character of a niche figure, of the kind placed above doorways; yet the round-headed frame in which it is set finds parallels among monuments of the time. It is possible that the figure may represent John de Villula, bishop of Wells and abbot of Bath (d. 1122), who was buried in Bath Abbey. But neither the purpose of the figure nor its identification is entirely certain.

More securely established near the head of the series are the two famous episcopal effigies in the nave of Salisbury Cathedral. The earlier of the pair is an effigy which dates from *c.*1140–50 and is traditionally thought to commemorate Bishop Roger (d. 1139). It takes the form of a Tournai marble slab, depicting a figure in canonical dress in low relief, squeezed between richly carved foliate borders bonded to the sides. The other effigy, of Purbeck marble, dates from the 1180s and almost certainly commemorates Bishop Jocelyn de Bohun.[28] It is carved in bolder relief and shows the bishop emerging from under an arched

[26] K. Clark, *Civilisation* (London, 1969), 56.

[27] S. Badham, 'Our Earliest English Effigies', *CMS Newsletter*, 23, 2 (2007/8), 9–13.

[28] H. de S. Shortt, *The Three Bishops' Tombs Moved to Salisbury Cathedral from Old Sarum* (Salisbury: Friends of Salisbury Cathedral, 1971). I am very grateful to Professor Brian Kemp for his advice on the identification of these effigies.

Figure 5. Bathampton (Som.): figure of an abbot, mid-twelfth century

recess (Fig. 6). Stylistically, it has affinities with the remarkable slab of Tournai marble to Gundrada, wife of William de Warenne, formerly at Lewes Priory, now in St John's, Southover: the orphrey inscription on the bishop's monument is a sophisticated variant of the inscription used on Gundrada's slab (Fig. 7). It is conceivable that both of the Salisbury tombs originated at Lewes, a wealthy Cluniac house which was one of the most important cultural and artistic centres in southern England.[29] A more likely possibility, however, is that the tombs were carved at or near Salisbury by a team of sculptors familiar with the most up-to-date continental styles.

Of roughly the same date as the Salisbury effigies are a group of three at Westminster Abbey. These are accommodated in recesses in the wall of the south walk of the cloister. For long associated with Abbots Gilbert Crispin, Laurence,

[29] The suggestion of F. Anderson, 'The Tournai Marble Tomb-Slabs in Salisbury Cathedral', in L. Keen and T. Cocke (eds.), *Medieval Art and Architecture at Salisbury Cathedral* (BAA Conference Transactions, 17, 1996), 85–9.

Figure 6. Salisbury Cathedral: Bishop Jocelyn de Bohun, *c*.1180–90

and William Humez, it is now suggested that they are more likely to commemorate (in this order) Abbots Gervase, Gilbert Crispin, and Laurence.[30] The slab in lowest relief was once believed to be the earliest sculpted effigy in England because of its association with Abbot Crispin, who died in 1118. The use of Tournai marble, however, rules out a date any earlier than the middle of the century. A more plausible candidate for the effigy is Abbot Gervase, nephew of Henry, bishop of Winchester, and member of a family known for its keen interest in this material; a convincing date for it would be in the 1160s.[31] The other two effigies, of Purbeck marble, are likely to date from some twenty years later and are probably retrospective commissions. The effigies at Salisbury and Westminster appear to have set a new standard for episcopal and abbatial commemoration. Within a few years effigies of a similar type were commissioned to Bishop Bartholomew (d. 1184) at Exeter, Abbot Clement (*c.*1180–90) at Sherborne Abbey (now fragmentary), and a series of abbots at Peterborough. There were even a few customers among the better endowed country clergy, as at Tolpuddle (Dorset). It is likely that the earliest effigial monuments to layfolk were commissioned by senior ecclesiastics or in an ecclesiastical context. The effigy of Aubrey de Vere (d. 1141), formerly at Colne Priory and now at Bures, showing him in a skirted garment, his arms at his sides, was probably commissioned by the monks of Colne to honour the founder and patron of their house.[32] A series of fine effigial monuments to members of the Beaumont family, all of *c.*1166, at Préaux Abbey, Normandy (all now lost), was probably commissioned by the members of that community as a tribute to their patronal family.[33]

Why did the taste for effigial commemoration achieve such widespread and lasting popularity? Part of the answer must be that the dramatic new style provided patrons of high standing with a way of drawing attention to their wealth and social position. As the patron class grew in number—and, especially, as intra-mural burial became more common—so high-status patrons began to look for new and more eye-catching forms of monument. At a time when the simple cross slab was

[30] F. Anderson, 'Three Westminster Abbots: A Problem of Identity', *CM* 4 (1989), 3–15. The effigies were probably originally in the chapter house.

[31] For Bishop Henry's cosmopolitan taste, which extended to a liking for Tournai marble, see Y. Kusaba, 'Henry of Blois, Winchester, and the 12th–Century Renaissance', in J. Crook (ed.), *Winchester Cathedral: Nine Hundred Years* (Chichester, 1993), 69–79.

[32] The brief epitaph at the head—+ Albericus de Ver—makes it likely that the person commemorated was Aubrey de Vere II, Henry I's chamberlain (d. 1141); his son, also Aubrey, who died in 1194, was created earl of Oxford, and would have been styled as such. The shape of the figure and the style of the decoration point to a date no later than the third quarter of the 12th cent. Among possible *comparanda* are two European effigies at Münster (Germany) and Niort (France), for which see K. Bauch, *Das Mittelalterliche Grabbild: figürliche Grabmaler des 11. bis 15. Jahrhunderts in Europa* (Berlin and New York, 1976), figs. 12 and 82 respectively. For discussion of the effigy, see A. Hills, 'Three Military Coffin-Slabs in Essex', *Trans. Essex Archaeological Soc.*, NS 23 (1945), 251–62.

[33] D. Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900–1300* (Harlow, 2005), 165 and pl. 4. Like Aubrey de Vere, the Beaumonts were not shown in armour; the identity of armour with rank was not yet complete. In all cases, the commemorated appears to have been shown in a form of ceremonial dress.

easily the commonest type of memorial, commissioning an effigial tomb provided a convenient way of commanding attention. A hierarchy of forms was emerging in which the effigy stood at the top.

However, there was probably another reason, and this was to be found in theology. In the twelfth century, definitions of purgatory were being refined and elaborated so as to forge a closer link between the living and the dead.[34] The dead were no longer seen, as they had been, as a group whose fate would be decided collectively on the day of Judgement; rather they were conceived as retaining individual identities and thus a body of individual sins, a conception which made them dependent on the intercession of the living. Once the idea gained acceptance that intercession could, and should, be offered for just one or two named individuals, then it became helpful to have the likenesses of those individuals on view in the church. This was where the commemorative effigy fitted in. In an age when few were literate, the effigy provided an effective *aide-mémoire* to prayer. Where praying hands were shown, they conveyed the essential message: pray for me.[35]

By the end of the twelfth century, the evidence of tombs points to a flourishing and deeply embedded commemorative culture in England. For some 500–600 years grave markers had been used to identify Christian burial places. To *c.*800 the evidence of physical commemoration is greatest in the north, but this is not to say that the practice was little known elsewhere. In the tenth century the size of the patron class appears to have increased, partly because the weakening of the minster system led to the creation of chapels with cemeteries. To this time, most lay burials had been made extra-mural. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, however, there was a shift by the clergy and proprietor class to burial within churches, burial *intra muros* being more prestigious. The shift in the geography of burial coincided with—indeed, it may have contributed to—a shift in the iconography of tomb sculpture. Patterns of abstract or zoomorphic design gave way to greater use of Christian iconography—in particular, the iconography of the cross. With the spread of intra-mural burial, tomb design became richer and more varied. Effigies were employed as well as cross slabs and other forms of grave marker. By the later twelfth century the aesthetic expectations of patrons and their agents had risen appreciably. There was an appetite for monuments of ever greater splendour and complexity. An interest in rich polychromatic effects found expression in a taste for stones of different colour and quality. In the twelfth century patrons of the avant-garde took a particular liking to tomb slabs of imported Tournai marble. The keenness for the shiny black hues of polished Tournai stone probably encouraged

[34] For Purgatory, see P. Ariès, *The Hour of our Death* (London, 1981), 462–7; C. Burgess, '"A fond thing vainly invented": An Essay on Purgatory and Pious Motive in Later Medieval England', in S. Wright (ed.), *Parish, Church and People* (London, 1988), 56–84.

[35] Anthropologists of death might add that an effigy in the likeness of the deceased, by more effectively substituting for him than a simple slab, was of greater value in repairing the damage to the social fabric caused by his loss.

Figure 7. St John's Southover, Lewes (transferred from Lewes Priory): coffin slab of Gundrada, wife of William de Warenne, *c*.1180

the use of other stones capable of taking a polish. By the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the commissioning of effigies of Purbeck marble, a stone which took on a fine dark hue when polished, became common.[36]

As the taste for richer commemorative styles took root, so a desire developed, particularly in the greater monasteries, to honour commemoratively particular distinguished personages who had lived well before the age of monument-commissioning. Where communities embarked on such programmes, it was usually the tomb of the founder to which they attended first. At Lewes Priory in the 1160s the founders, William de Warenne, and his wife, Gundrada, contemporaries of William the Conqueror, were honoured with magnificent new slabs of Tournai marble (Fig. 7).[37] Sometimes the burial places—or presumed burial places—of

[36] In eastern England, Alwalton stone, which produced a similar aesthetic effect, was used for the series of abbots at Peterborough.

[37] Gundrada's slab is now in the church of St John, Southover, Lewes; for its date, see F. Anderson, '"Uxor Mea": The First Wife of the First William of Warenne', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 130 (1992), 107–22. Her husband's slab is now lost.

early bishops and abbots were adorned by monuments in the new idiom to enhance the validity of a church's claims to antiquity. At Wells Cathedral a series of no fewer than seven effigies of pre-Conquest bishops were commissioned in stages in the opening years of the thirteenth century. Where earlier generations had failed to honour their dead in appropriate style, their successors were determined to make good the deficiency. In the eyes of contemporaries, monuments not only helped the dead by stimulating intercession, they also acted as tokens of esteem. A richly carved monument to a person of distinction or exemplary life was an ornament to a church, something from which it could derive honour. In the eleventh century, as we have seen, there had probably been a lessening of the monument's role as a witness to status. In the twelfth century, however, the dual character of the monument mightily reasserted itself. In an historically conscious age considerations of status were again accorded an importance comparable with, if not greater than, those of liturgy.

3

The Market: Fashion, Geography, and Clientele

PRODUCT RANGE

The enormous popular appetite for commemoration in medieval England encouraged a vigorous industry in the production of a range of monument types. The making of funerary monuments was widely distributed across a variety of centres. Most patrons would have had little or no difficulty in finding a product to their taste even if they lived at some distance from a quarry or workshop. The market in funerary sculpture was shaped by a variety of influences. The most important of these were the availability of raw materials, the wealth and social structure of an area, the cost of transport and the network of communications. A notable characteristic of the industry was its capacity for renewal and innovation. Changes in the pattern of demand were quickly followed by changes in the range of products on sale.

By the late twelfth century a wide range of monument types was already available to consumers. There were cross slab grave covers and other examples of minor monumental sculpture; incised slabs; effigial and semi-effigial slabs; and effigies in the round. Over time, the range of products became even richer and more diversified. In the late thirteenth century brasses joined sculpted relief figures in the range of effigial commemoration. By 1450 small wall monuments were available to those seeking less obtrusive commemoration. By the end of the Middle Ages the choice available to consumers was as wide as it was ever to be in the pre-modern period. A number of questions may be asked about the character of this market. How, if at all, did the relative popularity of the various monument types change over the years? How did the pattern of demand vary from one part of the country to another? And how were monuments distributed across the various types of churches—parish churches, cathedrals, and monasteries? These are questions which have a bearing on a larger and more general issue: how widely disseminated was the commemorative culture across English medieval society?

The first two questions—those relating to the chronological development of monuments and their geographical distribution across England—may be considered together; indeed, to some extent, they overlap. At no time in the Middle Ages was the chronology of development uniform across England. In

some parts of the country the range of monuments was broader, and the pace of change more rapid, than in others. Local variations in wealth and the structure of landholding were of key importance in shaping the pattern of commemoration. As an aid to understanding developments—and as a framework within which to accommodate a picture of regional diversity—it may be of some help to attempt a brief account of the typological evolution of monuments. An interpretation on broadly the following lines may be offered.

By the early twelfth century the cross slab grave cover had established itself as the most popular form of commemoration in most of England and Wales. Examples of such slabs are legion and are widely distributed. In the southern counties slabs were produced at a variety of quarry sites, while in eastern England those from the Barnack quarries near Peterborough achieved market dominance. Imported slabs from Tournai or the Meuse valley were commissioned by a number of elite clerical clients. In the second half of the twelfth century the first effigial monuments made their appearance. These eye-catching memorials were commissioned chiefly by clients of high status, notably the bishops and abbots. In the early twelfth century another new monument type won a position in the market—the incised slab, a flat engraved gravestone pioneered on the Continent and quickly developed in England by both metropolitan and regional workshops. Incised slabs enjoyed especial popularity with the clergy, who commissioned them in large numbers. In the thirteenth century the balance of production in the larger workshops gradually shifted from non-effigial to effigial sculpture. While non-effigial monuments were still produced, particularly in the regions, those of effigial type enjoyed the favour of well-to-do clients looking for a way of differentiating themselves from their inferiors. In southern England the rising demand for effigial monuments, particularly of priestly and of armoured figures, led to high production of fairly standardized figures in Purbeck marble. A high proportion of these were carved at or near the quarries at Corfe; a number, however, were produced in London at workshops called into being by the royal works at Westminster and the Tower. The use of Purbeck marble, whether for effigial or for non-effigial slabs, represented a native response to the popularity of imported Tournai marble.

By the late thirteenth century, the makers of incised slabs, like their Flemish counterparts, were enriching their products by the use of inlays. As a by-product of these experiments yet another monument type emerged—the brass. Brasses quickly rose to popularity with the pioneers of the avant-garde—the bishops and senior clergy. By the early fourteenth century they were also winning the favour of the knights and middling country gentry. At the same time, relief effigies were increasingly patronized by clients of the very amplest means, who sought thereby to advertise their status.

From the 1330s a new, and visually attractive, material began to supplant Purbeck marble for the making of sculpted effigies. This was alabaster, a fine-grained form of gypsum, quarried in the north Midlands. First used on an extant tomb for the effigy of King Edward II (d. 1327) at Gloucester (Fig. 33), by the 1370s it was highly esteemed by patrons for its luminous quality, and was

employed for tomb chests and effigies all over England. In the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, under the influence of the metropolitan craftsmen, a noticeable move towards standardization occurred in the production of effigies. Near-identical military figures in freestone or alabaster were produced by workshops in many different parts of the country. At the same time, carved tomb chests of similarly standardized design won the favour of elite clients who wanted to draw attention to their standing. The appearance of new monument types led, as it had earlier, to the gradual eclipse of their humbler predecessors. These earlier types, however, did not disappear altogether; they simply declined in status. Cross slabs, for example, continued to be widely used by the lesser laity and clergy. The effect of innovation was to enlarge consumer choice: to create a richer and more varied product range which could accommodate the aspirations of a client class of growing range and complexity.

In broad terms, this pattern of development was the chronology found across most of England—indeed, most of Britain—in the medieval period. Constant experimentation by the workshops led to a process of evolution whereby, as new monument types were introduced, the older products went down-market and were patronized by humbler clients. The types of monument popular with aristocratic clients in one century would be used by the gentry in the next, and by their inferiors in the century after that.

Within this pattern, however, local and regional variations naturally made themselves felt. Throughout the period to 1500 the character of commemoration in any area was shaped by a web of influences, which varied in balance and impact between localities. While broad, nation-wide trends exercised a strong general influence—the most obvious being the appetite for intercession—it was none the less the local colouring of society which gave the pattern of commemoration in any area its distinctive character.

In any county or region, one of the most significant factors influencing taste would have been the level and distribution of wealth. In a prosperous, well-settled locality, supported by a healthy agriculture, there would be a broader scattering of large- or medium-scale lay monuments than in a poor one producing only a small surplus. Equally, the pattern of distribution of that wealth across society would be registered in the level of competitiveness in commemoration. If wealth were spread fairly evenly across an affluent proprietor class, a degree of competitiveness might be expected in the patronage of tombs, as these became a means by which people could differentiate themselves socially. The distribution of landownership between secular and ecclesiastical proprietors would also have had a bearing on commemoration. In areas such as north Hampshire, where a large number of manors were owned by ecclesiastical proprietors, there would be few resident gentry and thus few knightly monuments. In general, the dominance of an area by non-resident or institutional landowners led to a dearth of elite secular monuments. In parts of the north and west, however, the absence of a resident knightly class permitted the flowering of a sub-knightly gentry, who took to commissioning civilian effigies or semi-effigial slabs over their tombs.

Social and economic considerations apart, the most obvious influence on the scale and character of commemoration in any area would be the availability of raw materials. In areas where good-quality freestone was readily accessible, there would usually be a tradition of commemoration in the freestone medium. In areas, however, where stone was less readily available or of poor quality, greater use would be made of imported monument types, such as brasses. It might also be the case that, because of high transport costs, commemoration was associated largely with the elite. On the other hand, if a region lacking stone was reasonably prosperous and possessed a broad landowning class, such luxuries could probably be afforded.

Connected with the question of the availability of materials is that of access to transport networks. The quality of commemoration in an area would usually bear some relationship to the ease with which finished products could be brought in from outside, for example from London. If an area were relatively inaccessible by road or river, it is likely that its monuments would mostly be of local origin and fashioned from local materials. If, however, it was on the coast and well served by river systems, then it was likely to draw on imported products. The cost of transport over a distance in the Middle Ages could be considerable, adding greatly to the cost to the consumer. When, for example, Sir John de Braose's brass was carried from London to Wiston (Sussex), a distance of some 60 miles, in 1426, the cost amounted to 20*s*., perhaps an eighth or a tenth of the production cost.[1] Monuments from outside a region would generally be commissioned by clients of elite status, and then only if they could be obtained with reasonable economy. It is no coincidence that most of the big Flemish brasses and incised slabs in England were commissioned by merchants who had extensive trading links with the great cities of Flanders.

A final influence on an area's commemorative style might be the pattern of its cultural and artistic patronage. A notable characteristic of English medieval church monuments is their strongly architectural character. This quality arose from the close involvement in tomb-making of sculptors whose primary employment was in the carving of stonework for great churches and cathedrals. On occasion, a programme of works at a 'great church' could have a major effect on the character of tomb-making in a locality. In the thirteenth century, for example, the sculptors working on the west front of Wells Cathedral were responsible for a number of fine freestone effigies in the south-west, which attracted wide imitation. Around the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the work of the distinguished school of masons employed by Edward I at Westminster and elsewhere influenced elite tomb design nation-wide for a whole generation. In the mid-fourteenth century the series of wall alcove tombs constructed along the choir aisles of Hereford Cathedral set off a fashion for alcove tombs which spread across Herefordshire. Within particularly large churches distinct traditions of tomb design could develop. At

[1] S. Freeth, 'M.S. I at Wiston, Sussex', *MBS Bulletin*, 19 (Oct. 1978), 11. The main element in the carriage of a brass was the bulky stone in which it was set. For this reason brasses were sometimes set in their stones locally; this is the case, for example, with London style 'C' brass of Sir Nicholas Burnell (d. 1382) at Acton Burnell (Salop).

Winchester Cathedral, for example, chantry chapels were adopted as the standard commemorative form by the late medieval bishops, while at Canterbury Archbishop Stratford's pinnacled monument stimulated an appetite among the archbishops for monuments in a similar rich style.[2]

DISTRIBUTION BY REGION AND TYPE

A number of recent in-depth studies have attempted to track the distribution of monument types chronologically across particular counties or regions of England.

One important study which has taken a relatively short period as its focus is A. N. McClain's survey of monuments in the North Riding of Yorkshire to the late twelfth century.[3] Examining the interrelation of funerary and architectural patronage, McClain highlights the fluctuations in demand for monuments in the region which occurred in the two centuries from *c*. 970. In the years of Anglo-Scandinavian dominance of the north to *c*.1070 she sees the demand for stone grave markers running at consistently high levels. In the century and a quarter which followed, however, she argues, this demand fell off, with evidence of only three dozen monuments being commissioned as opposed to well over 300 before. McClain ventures the suggestion that in the twelfth century patrons sought commemoration and display in the building of stone churches instead of in the commissioning of monuments. It is noticeable that after 1180, when church-building slowed, the production of monuments picked up again.

The most comprehensive study surveying a longer period is B. and M. Gittos's analysis of monuments in another part of Yorkshire, the East Riding.[4] Like McClain, the Gittoses are struck by the relative scarcity of monuments from the late eleventh and twelfth centuries—and this in an area with the economic resources to support a rich commemorative culture. The suggestion is made that the Conqueror's harrying of the North in the winter of 1069–70 may have contributed to a depression in local demand.

In the post-twelfth-century period the Gittoses' main finding is that demand picked up and ran at consistently high levels. The trend from now on was one of increasing diversity in production to the late fourteenth century, followed by relative homogenization in the fifteenth. From the thirteenth century a number of cross slabs have survived, most of them of indigenous origin, but a few imported from the marble quarries of Purbeck in Dorset and Frosterley in Co. Durham. The earliest extant sculpted effigies in the Riding date from the end of this century,

[2] The Winchester chantry chapels were probably the source of inspiration for the series of chantries at nearby Christchurch Priory.

[3] A. N. McClain, 'Patronage, Power and Identity: The Social Use of Local Churches and Commemorative Monuments in Tenth- to Twelfth-Century North Yorkshire' (University of York Ph.D. thesis, 2006).

[4] B. Gittos and M. Gittos, 'A Survey of East Riding Sepulchral Monuments before 1500', in C. Wilson (ed.), *Medieval Art and Architecture in the East Riding of Yorkshire* (BAA Conference Trans. 9, 1989), 91–108.

all of them products of the workshop known as York series 'A'. In the fourteenth century there was a big expansion in the range of products available. A second workshop, based in the Beverley area (the Wolds series), joined the earlier team in producing stone effigies—its products generally of inferior quality to York 'A', and with more localized distribution. In the second half of the century the first brasses of local origin appeared, probably the work of masons associated with the Minster. At the same time, the repertory of sculpture was extended to include effigies of alabaster, a material first used in the 1360s for the tomb attributed to William de la Pole at Hull. In the fifteenth century the near-hectic pace of innovation slowed and the range of monument types contracted. Alabaster monuments claimed an increasing share of the elite market, stifling production at York and putting the Wolds workshop out of business, while a few alabaster incised slabs joined their sculpted cousins. Brasses were represented in the Riding in increasing number, products of London origin now competing with those made at York. Cross slabs were still produced in some quantity to satisfy demand at the lower end of the market. In place of the varied cross designs of earlier times, however, a simple straight-armed cross with fleur-de-lis terminals became the norm.

Jonathan Finch's survey of commemoration in four regions of Norfolk—the hundreds of Burnham, Erpingham, and Depwade and a sample of churches in Norwich—produced a very different set of patterns from the Gittoses'.[5] In contrast with the East Riding, in Finch's Norfolk cross slabs are well represented, there being five in Burnham hundred, three in Depwade, and half a dozen or more in Erpingham. In Burnham, in the west of the county, the slabs are all from the Barnack quarries, a mark of the importance of river systems in defining markets; in the hundreds further east, a scattering of imported Purbeck slabs is found. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the range of commemorative forms broadened, as it did elsewhere in England, to include effigial slabs and brasses. The slabs in the four areas are mostly of local origin, but include at least one of Purbeck marble;[6] the figure brasses, however, are—or were—products of the main London workshops. A curiosity of the occupational distribution of early Norfolk monuments is the heavy predominance of clergy in the west of the county, the reasons for which are unclear. In the fifteenth century there was a rapid increase in the number of monuments right across the county. This increase was particularly marked in the generation after 1470. One reason, Finch suggests, was the general increase in prosperity, particularly in the city of Norwich itself. However, the heavy concentration of memorials in areas populated by resident gentry points to a second reason—the growing appetite for commemoration of the lesser gentry who were looking for ways of affirming their position in society. This same preoccupation with status led to the

[5] J. Finch, *Church Monuments in Norfolk before 1850: An Archaeology of Commemoration* (British Archaeological Reports British Series, 317, 2000); idem, 'Commemorating Change: An Archaeological Interpretation of Monuments in Norfolk before 1400', *Church Archaeology*, 4 (2000), 27–42.

[6] The female effigy at Stratton Strawless. And note that outside his sample areas there is a notable imported Flemish incised slab at Gressenhall.

appearance in Norfolk of a new monument type—the free-standing tomb chest with effigy. This elite form of commemoration was patronized particularly by the greater gentry, who found in it a way of proclaiming their local superiority. Brasses emerged in the fifteenth century as the most popular form of memorial among the middling and lesser gentry and the burgesses. By the 1450s a workshop had come into existence at Norwich dedicated to meeting local demand, and offering products which significantly undercut London products in price. As in most other parts of England, brasses found particular favour with the parochial and lesser clergy.

On the surface, the pattern of evolution in Norfolk appears to have similarities to that in the East Riding. Cross slabs were the commonest form of memorial in the early thirteenth century, but suffered a decline in status later with the introduction of new monument types; sculpted effigial monuments became popular with elite clients in the fourteenth century and brasses with customers at all levels in the fifteenth. Cross slabs were never discarded altogether.

Despite the broadly similar patterns of evolution in the two areas, however, there are striking differences. In the first place, it is noteworthy that there are more imported monuments in Norfolk than in Yorkshire; in the thirteenth century cross slabs were brought to Norfolk from Barnack in the west and the Purbeck quarries in the south.[7] Norfolk lacked a good stone of its own, and patrons had to commission memorials from outside. In general, they had little difficulty in doing so because of Norfolk's good waterborne communications, particularly along the river systems. For the same reason—lack of good stone—no workshops producing sculpted effigies were established at Norwich, as they were at York. Throughout the medieval period Norfolk was far more reliant on London-made and other imported products than Yorkshire and the other northern counties. Only in the fifteenth century did the situation change, when a major and long-lived brass-producing workshop was set up in Norwich. A second difference between the commemorative patterns of the two counties is the greater evidence of status-consciousness in Norfolk. Norfolk's wealth in the fifteenth century—and, no less importantly, the even distribution of that wealth across the elite—made for much fiercer competition in commemoration than in the East Riding. In Norfolk there was an ambitious lesser gentry which found affirmation of status in the commissioning of modest—and modestly priced—memorials. Not only do brasses to lesser gentry survive in larger numbers than in Yorkshire; a keener interest was shown in recording details of rank and office on them.

If any one conclusion emerges from this analysis of monuments in Norfolk and the East Riding, it is that the pattern of commemoration in any area was shaped by a wide variety of influences. The wealth of a particular society and the distribution of that wealth both had a bearing; so too did such factors as the availability of suitable materials, the quality of communications, and proximity to the London workshops. It is because of this variety of circumstance that a corresponding variety

[7] For a list of Purbeck marble slabs in Norfolk, see *CMS Newsletter*, 15, 1 (Summer 1999), 10–21. The accompanying map shows distribution following broadly the routes of rivers.

is found in the character and distribution of monuments. Is it possible to offer any observations, however impressionistic, on the pattern of evolution in other regions?

In the far north, in the Border counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, and Durham, the dominant feature was for long the high production of cross slab grave covers. Cross slabs are as common in the northern counties as brasses were to be later in the southern. This region has admittedly benefited from Peter Ryder's meticulous recording of such memorials, which means that we are particularly well informed about them. None the less, by any standard the sheer numbers are still impressive. In thinly populated Northumberland Ryder has identified no fewer than 660 slabs.[8] In County Durham he has identified nearly as many: 517.[9] To the west, in Cumbria, he has identified over 300 and further south, in West Yorkshire, 180.[10] It is unfortunate that assigning precise dates to these slabs is so difficult because the great majority of them lack inscriptions.[11] All the same, it is clear from the extant evidence that cross slabs were being produced right the way through the Middle Ages. There is evidence here of a sustained demand which could be met almost entirely from local sources of supply.

The sheer dominance of the cross slab, however, points to a certain lack of development in the market. Once cross slabs are laid aside, the only type of memorial widely used in the far north appears to have been the sculpted effigy. Effigies in local freestone or Frosterley marble survive in considerable number from the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As elsewhere in England, the principal clients were the knights and better-off clergy. In the fifteenth century a few monuments of the grander sort made their appearance. Big sculpted monuments of metropolitan origin were commissioned by a number of the bishops of Durham. At Staindrop and Brancepeth (Co. Durham) effigial monuments on the grand scale were placed to the memory of the earls of Westmorland. Brasses, however, were few in number. According to the *Rites of Durham*, there was once a fine series commemorating the priors and senior monks of St Cuthbert's in Durham Cathedral.[12] Elsewhere, however, there were hardly any. There is no parallel in the northern Border counties to the extensive gentry patronage of brasses found further south; the York workshops made virtually no headway in this market.[13]

[8] P. F. Ryder, 'Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Northumberland, 1: South West Northumberland', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th ser. 28 (2000), 51–110; idem, 'Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Northumberland, 2: Newcastle and South East Northumberland', ibid. 5th ser. 30 (2002), 75–137; idem, 'Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Northumberland, 3: North Northumberland', ibid. 5th ser. 32 (2003), 91–136.

[9] P. F. Ryder, *The Medieval Cross Slab Grave Cover in County Durham* (Architectural and Archaeological Soc. of Durham and Northumberland, Research Report 1, 1985).

[10] P. F. Ryder, *Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Cumbria* (Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Soc., extra series, 32, 2005); idem, *Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in West Yorkshire* (Wakefield: West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, 1991).

[11] For brief discussion of the evolution of design, see above, 21, 27.

[12] *The Rites of Durham*, ed. J. T. Fowler (Surtees Soc. 107, 1903), 18, 22–3, 29–30, 34, 40, 44.

[13] In the first half of the 14th cent. there was probably a workshop producing brasses at Newcastle; this ceased production at the time of the Black Death and did not revive (Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, 134, 153–9).

What emerges with force from an overview of monuments in the far North is just how little variety there was in commemoration in the locality. In most parts of England a wide range of monument types was commissioned. Cross slabs formed one level of a hierarchy which descended from tomb chests with effigies through recess effigies, incised slabs and brasses to simple grave markers. In the Border counties only the barest outlines of such a hierarchy are found. Just two types of monument are encountered at all commonly—cross slabs and sculpted effigies, both of local origin.

If a reason is to be offered for this lack of variety, it is to be found in the relative lack of wealth. The counties along the Scottish border were among the least prosperous in medieval England. The cost of importing monuments from the Midlands or South would have been beyond the reach of many local patrons. Northern society was also lacking in sharp differentiation. Accordingly, there was less interest in affirming status through commemoration than in many other areas. For most patrons, it appears, cross slabs constituted a perfectly satisfactory form of memorial. Those who wanted a grander memorial would commission an effigy from a local sculptor. Demand was insufficient to tempt other suppliers to enter the trade.

In Midland England a much broader range of monument types was commissioned. In fact, the market here was as rich and diversified as in any part of the country. Predictably, cross slabs were produced in large numbers in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Good examples are found right across the region, particularly in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire. The main source of supply in the east Midlands was the great quarry centre of Barnack, which exported slabs down the Welland to stoneless East Anglia and the Lindsey coast (Fig. 8);[14] a few Barnack products even found their way into the Home Counties. In Lincolnshire and beyond, the quarries at Ancaster, near Grantham, were a major source of supply for cross and incised slabs. Across the north Midlands from Lincolnshire to the Peak District a range of local producers maintained production for varying periods of time. Each of these suppliers produced slabs in its own highly individual style, those in the east showing the influence of Barnack designs. In the south Midlands, which were less accessible from Barnack, a scattering of Purbeck marble cross slabs is to be found. Good examples are to be seen at Great Milton and Dorchester Abbey (Oxon.).[15]

In the second quarter of the thirteenth century Purbeck marble or freestone effigies began to make their appearance in the Midlands. Excellent early examples are provided by the effigies of Bishop William de Blois and another bishop in Worcester Cathedral. Secular effigies in Purbeck marble are represented by the knights at Blyth (Notts.) and Castle Ashby and Stowe Nine Churches (both Northants). By the mid-fourteenth century, with the output from the Purbeck quarries in decline,

[14] L. A. S. Butler, 'Minor Medieval Monumental Sculpture in the East Midlands', *Archaeological Jnl.* 121 (1965), 111–53.

[15] *CMS Newsletter*, 10, 2 (Winter 1994–5), 36; 13, 2 (Winter 1997–8), 49; 15, 2 (Winter 1999–2000), 44.

Figure 8. Trumpington (Cambs.): cross slab grave covers, thirteenth or fourteenth century

the demand for effigies was met principally by sculptors working in freestone. A Derbyshire workshop produced a series of fine effigies, among them the civilian at Crich (Fig. 57), while a Lincolnshire workshop, probably based at Ancaster, was responsible for distinctive sunken effigies, on which only the head and the feet of the figure were visible (Fig. 9). In Herefordshire, in the far west of the region, the local sandstone was used for the making of incised slabs and low-relief cross slabs.

The decades just before and after the Black Death saw significant changes in the pattern of commemoration in the Midlands. In the 1340s the first alabaster effigial monuments were produced. The earliest extant example appears to be the knight at Hanbury (Staffs.), *c*.1346.[16] By the end of the fourteenth century alabaster had established itself as among the most popular of all materials for effigies in the region. Its twin attractions were that it was visually appealing and locally available. Initially it was used mainly for high-status sculpted effigies, in particular for sculpted effigies on chests. Later, however, it was employed in incised slab-making for a market which comprised the middling and upper gentry, affluent burgesses, and parish clergy. The second major change in the late Middle Ages is

[16] C. Blair, 'The Date of the Early Alabaster Knight at Hanbury, Staffordshire', *CM* 7 (1992), 3–18.

Figure 9. Kingerby (Lincs.): a member of the Disney family, *c*.1340–50

found in the appearance of brasses as an alternative to freestone effigies or slabs. In the early fourteenth century brass-producing workshops had been established at Shrewsbury, Lincoln, and perhaps elsewhere. These were all short-lived, however, apparently not surviving the Black Death. For over a century from 1350 all brasses placed in churches in the Midlands heartland were London imports. Brasses were commissioned in largest number in the south Midlands, whither they could be imported by river transport and by road. Brasses were thinner on the ground in the north and west, where transport added to the cost: here alabaster incised

slabs or, in the case of Herefordshire, slabs with coloured inlays satisfied demand. In the last quarter of the fifteenth century a local brass engraving workshop successfully established itself at Coventry. With the rise in rural prosperity and the keener interest in the affirmation of status, there was a growing demand for monuments from urban and lesser gentry clients, who looked to a local producer. The Coventry workshops maintained a slow but steady pace of production under a series of managers until the mid-sixteenth century. At elite level, the demand for monuments after 1400 was satisfied chiefly by the production of alabaster sculpted effigies on tomb chests. As in the East Riding, cross slabs declined in status after the thirteenth century, being principally favoured by the parish clergy.

The Midland region is thus closer to east Yorkshire than the Borders in the evidence it affords of a range of monument types. Cross slabs, effigial slabs, brasses, and sculpted effigies on chests are all represented, with alabaster incised slabs perhaps the region's speciality. Production was dispersed, with workshops in all areas producing monuments of different types. The south Midlands, which had easy access to the Thames valley, afford greater evidence of metropolitan influence than the north. Imported monuments are notably few relative to the size and prosperity of the area. This was because of the ready availability within the region of both good-quality freestone and the particular favourite of the period, alabaster.

In the southern English counties the pattern of commemoration broadly conformed to that in the other, more prosperous parts of the country. There was a small number of areas, notably Wealden Surrey, the Wiltshire Downs, and Cornwall, where settlement was thin and communications poor; here relatively few monuments were commissioned. In most of southern England, however, there was a keen appetite for commemoration. As in the Midlands and East Anglia, a wide range of monument types was represented. The familiar cross slab was dominant in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As soon as other, more elaborate types became available, however, the cross slab declined in status. In the thirteenth century Purbeck marble incised slabs became popular and, later, brasses from the same workshops. In the counties furthest to the south-east the pattern of commemoration was shaped by two main influences—the first, London's dominance as a production centre and the second, the absence of freestone of high quality. The prestige of the tomb sculptors based in London and associated with the crown meant that London or 'court' styles were widely disseminated across the region. Even when local producers of stone effigies entered production, they were heavily influenced by London styles; there was no place for eccentricities like the Lincolnshire sunken relief figures. London's dominance also meant that before the mid-fifteenth century London-made brasses flourished without rival in the region. It was only when London production slowed in the 1460s that provincial engravers south of the Trent were able successfully to establish themselves for any length of time. The second characteristic—the absence of good-quality stone—meant that the raw materials for tomb-making all had to be imported. Purbeck marble was brought to London by sea from Dorset; freestone and alabaster, quarried in the Midlands, were likewise brought in. The cost of transport added to the cost

of the final product to the consumer. None the less, the enormous advantages which London had as a national distribution centre more than outweighed this disadvantage.

The wide distribution of monuments across England attests the strong demand for funerary sculpture in the Middle Ages. This was a demand felt at all levels of landholding society, even down to the freeholder class. The variety of tastes—and, by implication, the often localized nature of demand—resulted in a remarkably decentralized structure of supply. Wherever there was good-quality stone, there was likely to be a workshop producing monuments, however small. London-made monuments commanded respect by their sheer authority. Outside the south-east, however, they never succeeded in driving locally made products out of the market. One reason for this was the sheer diversity of demand across the country. Taste in any locality was likely to be shaped by a combination of the structure of local society and the wealth of the client class; the range of monuments which suited one area might not be suited to another. The second reason was the all-important one of the cost of transport. Over long distances the cost of carrying a bulky monument could be considerable. In the fourteenth century patrons in the mercantile elite of the east coast found it more economical to import a brass or an incised slab from the Low Countries than to bring one from London. When, as with monuments, transport was a major constituent in end cost, the local producer was always likely to enjoy an advantage over a more distant one. The richer customer, seeking a prestige monument, could afford the price differential; the poorer customer could not. Towards the lower end of the market local producers, the carvers of the simple cross slabs, would always find a market for their products. In Cornwall locally carved slate slabs enjoyed a wide market well into the sixteenth century.[17]

DISTRIBUTION ACROSS CHURCHES

From the range of monument types and the distribution of demand between them, it is natural to turn to the distribution of monuments across categories of churches—cathedrals, abbeys, and parish churches. In what sorts of churches were monuments found in greatest number? What was their relative distribution across town and country? And how has the scale of loss affected our view of the pattern of distribution?

These are not by any means easy questions to answer. Only a proportion—perhaps only a small proportion—of the monuments originally commissioned have come down to us. The combination of neglect and deliberate destruction have, between them, exacted a heavy toll. The rows of indents of lost brasses in a cathedral like Lincoln or Ely bear witness to the scale of our loss.

The process of large-scale destruction began in the mid-sixteenth century with the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Following the closure of the lesser monasteries

[17] P. Cockerham, *Continuity and Change: Memorialisation and the Cornish Monument Industry* (British Archaeological Reports British Series, 412, 2006), 21.

in 1536 and of the greater houses three years later virtually all the monuments in the regular and mendicant institutions were broken up or allowed to fall into decay. Stone monuments were plundered for building materials, while brass memorials were sold off for scrap or for reuse elsewhere. The mendicant churches in the towns appear to have been particularly rich in monuments. A burial list for the London Grey Friars gives the impression of a church bursting with tomb sculpture.[18] In 1549 a further orgy of destruction was set off following the dissolution of the chantries and the abolition of the doctrine of purgatory. Monuments containing religious imagery or offending religious language were especially vulnerable to assault. Sometimes, as at Fairford, offending images or epitaphs were erased by churchwardens or relatives of the deceased to save the monument from attack. Elizabeth's proclamation of September 1560 put a stop to further deliberate destruction, and in some cases monuments were repaired.[19] By this time, however, enormous damage had already been done. In Durham Cathedral, for example, many of the brasses had been destroyed by 1593, while others which were then described as intact were lost by *c.*1620–30.[20]

In the seventeenth century a fresh wave of destruction was unleashed by the forces of the Puritan revolution. In 1641 an Act was passed ordering the destruction and removal of all crucifixes and religious imagery. The most famous record of the carrying out of such destruction is the diary of William Dowsing, the earl of Manchester's agent in Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.[21] The pages of this remarkable account show Dowsing destroying large numbers of what he calls 'pictures'—that is, windows, roods, or stone images. So far as monuments were concerned, Dowsing's interest centred almost exclusively on inscriptions: he often records the removal of an 'orate pro anima' epitaph. Provided the rest of the monument were unoffending, he would usually leave it alone. In addition to deliberate destruction carried out on parliamentary orders, a trail of damage was often left in its path by the victorious parliamentary army. According to Bruno Ryves, a royalist propagandist writing as 'Mercurius Rusticus', at Peterborough Cathedral 'not one monument . . . escaped undefaced', while at Winchester the soldiers 'utterly demolished some of the monuments, defacing others'.[22] Of all the monument-rich cathedrals, it was Lichfield which suffered worst. In 1646 the cathedral precincts were stormed by the parliamentarians, and virtually all of the medieval monuments, stained glass, and woodwork were destroyed.[23] At Durham

[18] E. B. S. Shepherd, 'The Church of the Friars Minors in London', *Archaeological Jnl.* 59 (1902), 258–87; C. L. Kingsford, *The Grey Friars of London* (Aberdeen, 1915).

[19] In London, for example, Sir William Walworth's monument in St Michael's, Crooked Lane, defaced in Edward VI's reign, was restored by the Fishmongers, Walworth's Company. Richard Whittington's tomb in St Michael Paternoster, likewise defaced, was repaired in Mary's reign: J. Stow, *A Survey of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (2 vols., London, 1908, repr. 2000), 220, 243.

[20] P. Lindley, '"Disrespect for the Dead?" The Destruction of Tomb Monuments in mid Sixteenth-Century England', *CM* 19 (2004), 53–79.

[21] *The Journal of William Dowsing: Iconoclasm in East Anglia during the English Civil War*, ed. T. Cooper (Woodbridge, 2001).

[22] J. Bertram, *Lost Brasses* (Newton Abbot, 1976), 22–3.

[23] S. Lehmberg, *Cathedrals under Siege: Cathedrals in English Society, 1600–1700* (Exeter, 1996), ch. 2. In 1724 Thomas Martin was to write of Lichfield: 'There have been in this church abundance

the few monuments which had survived the earlier iconoclasm were smashed when some 3,000 Scots were imprisoned there in 1650. At Lincoln and York many of the magnificent brasses were destroyed just after the end of the Civil War in the early 1650s.[24]

In the next two centuries the high rate of loss was to continue. The main problem in this era was not so much deliberate destruction as neglect by clergy and churchwardens. In some places brasses were sold off to raise money. At Ingham the magnificent series of brasses was sold for this reason in 1800. 'Nobody', wrote Cotman, 'sought to recover them . . . neither the minister nor the churchwardens cared for such things.'[25] Elsewhere, brasses and other fittings suffered the covetous attention of thieves. Good medieval brasses were stolen from Chieveley and Thatcham (Berks.), Oulton (Suffolk), and Stanton Harcourt (Oxon.), to name but a few of the churches to suffer in this way. Restorations of churches could in many cases do more harm than good. Whenever the interior of a church was reordered, or its floors repaved, brasses and other monuments would be thrown out and sold as scrap. At St George's, Windsor, the brasses which had survived the Civil War were thrown out when the chapel was repaved in 1789–90.[26] At Camberwell, when the church was rebuilt in 1841, the brasses were all taken away by the builder as perquisites and sold.[27]

Despite the heavy losses, it is possible to reconstruct something of the earlier pattern of commemoration through use of a range of sources. For brasses, indents—despoiled slabs from which indents have been removed—are of especial value. Large numbers of indents survive in churches where the slabs have been pressed into service for paving. Particularly extensive series are to be seen at Lincoln Cathedral (Fig. 10) and the church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford.[28] Of exceptional value is the series at St Botolph's, Boston. Here there are no fewer than 61 indents for English-made brasses and a further twenty Flemish incised slabs which once had inlays of brass or composition; the church's medieval floor has survived almost intact. Equally impressive—and thus comparably instructive—is the nave floor at Salle (Norfolk).

For the broad range of medieval monuments, however, the main body of information is to be found in documentary sources. These span a period almost as wide as the monuments themselves, from the fourteenth century to the post-medieval centuries. From the Middle Ages, the most remarkable descriptive source

of flat grave stones inlaid with brass, but not the least piece of brass remaining. These stones are ranged in order from the west door quite up to the altar steps and some from the south door to the middle of the church' (Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Top. gen. e85, fo. 97). Today, not only have the brasses gone; so too have the despoiled slabs.

[24] P. Lindley, *Tomb Destruction and Scholarship: Medieval Monuments in Early Modern England* (Donington, 2007), 113–24.

[25] Bertram, *Lost Brasses*, 28.

[26] N. E. Saul, 'The Growth of a Mausoleum: The Pre-1600 Tombs and Brasses of St George's Chapel, Windsor', *Antiquaries Journal*, 87 (2007), 220–58.

[27] M. Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses in Surrey* (Bath, 1970), 69–70.

[28] For a list of the indents at Lincoln, see H. K. St J. Sanderson, 'Lincoln Cathedral', *TMBS* 2 (1892–6), 314–26; 3 (1892–6), 67–87, 119–42; and for those in St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, J. Bertram, 'The Lost Brasses of Oxford', ibid. 11 (1973), 353–64.

is the account of the monuments in St Albans Abbey written by an anonymous monk in the mid-fifteenth century.[29] Informed by a sense of pride in the Abbey's heritage, this catalogues all the tombs and slabs in the abbey church and cloisters, carefully distinguishing the materials from which they were made. From the mid- to late sixteenth century come a handful of nostalgic descriptions of the contents of other churches. Of mid-century date is a description of the monuments and windows of Hatfield church (Yorks.), which gives not altogether reliable details of inscriptions.[30] From late in Elizabeth's reign comes a remarkable account of the monuments in Durham Cathedral, probably the work of a former monk of the house, George Bates, the last registrar.[31] This text lists many of the magnificent series of brasses and tombs of former bishops, priors, and obedientiaries of the cathedral priory, not one of which survives complete today.

In the post-medieval period the fullest and most comprehensive records of lost monuments are found in the collections of the heralds and antiquaries. The process of gathering information on England's antiquities had been begun by writers who had made notes in the course of travels undertaken for business or military purposes. In the 1470s William Worcester, a pioneer in the field, assembled a rich set of antiquarian jottings describing a range of buildings in southern England, including Sele Priory and Bury St Edmunds Abbey—in both of which he recorded monuments.[32] Between 1535 and 1543 John Leland, Henry VIII's personal antiquary, undertook a series of journeys around England taking notes on all the castles, manor houses, and churches he visited; he records a number of monuments now lost, including that of Sir Matthew Gourney at Stoke sub Hamdon (Som.).[33] A century later an officer in Charles I's army, Richard Symonds, compiled a diary and a set of church notes while on campaign in southern England in 1643–5. In both documents, he gives details of many monuments in the Thames valley counties, Dorset, and the Welsh borders.[34]

At the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a growing appreciation of the threat to medieval heritage engendered a more systematic approach to recording. In his wide-ranging *Survey of London* (1598) John Stow brought together information on London's history and antiquities, detailing burials in all the parish churches and some of the dissolved monasteries.[35] In 1631 John Weever, in his *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, attempted a listing of all tombs and brasses in the dioceses of London, Norwich, Canterbury, and Rochester, incorporating transcripts (not always accurate) of many inscriptions.[36] By the end of the sixteenth

[29] *Annales Monasterii Sancti Albani a Johanne Amundesham Monacho*, i, ed. H. T. Riley (Rolls Series, 28, 1870), 434–49. For discussion, see below, 84–5.

[30] C. Cross, 'Hatfield Church in the Early Sixteenth Century', *Northern History*, 43 (2006), 333–42.

[31] *Rites of Durham*.

[32] William Worcestre, *Itineraries*, ed. J. H. Harvey (Oxford, 1969), 157, 161, 163.

[33] *The Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith (5 vols., London, 1907–10), i. 159. For Tudor antiquarian scholarship on monuments, see Lindley, *Tomb Destruction and Scholarship*, ch. 2.

[34] BL, Harley MSS 964, 965; BL, Add. MS 17062, published as *Diary of Richard Symonds*, ed. C. E. Long (Camden Soc., 1859).

[35] Stow, *Survey of London*.

[36] J. Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (London, 1631).

century the heralds were regularly visiting churches to record inscriptions and coats of arms for use in genealogical research. John Philipot's notebook, compiled between 1613 and 1642, records effigies, coats of arms, and inscriptions in Kent, a county with which he had connections, while a densely packed notebook of similar date, associated with William Burton, covers the north and west Midland counties.[37] Perhaps the most remarkable compilation of this period is William Dugdale's *Book of Monuments*, compiled in 1640–1, in anticipation of the coming conflict, on the suggestion of Dugdale's patron Sir Christopher Hatton.[38] This is of very particular value for the beautifully executed coloured drawings (by William Sedgwick) of many monuments now lost, in particular in the cathedrals of Peterborough, Lincoln, and Lichfield, and the churches of Drayton Basset and St Mary's, Warwick. In the north of England extensive recording was undertaken by Roger Dodsworth (d. 1654), who collected much of the material for Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum*, and whose knowledge of Yorkshire churches was especially detailed.[39] The two difficulties posed by use of the heralds' and antiquaries' work, however, are their lack of accuracy and their frequent failure to specify the medium they were recording: whether it was stone, glass, or brass. Only in the late seventeenth century did the collection of information become more discriminating. A good example of the new standards which were set is afforded by John Torre's comprehensive listing of the brasses in York Minster (*c*.1680–90).[40]

Through the sifting and collation of this body of material, and through the consideration alongside it of the evidence of despoiled slabs, it becomes possible to recover a sense of what was lost in the centuries of neglect. What impression do we form of the pattern of medieval commemoration in its heyday?

A major strength of the antiquarian evidence is the insight which it affords into the riches once contained in the urban churches. With a few exceptions, the churches of our major towns are today largely devoid of medieval monuments. Only in the churches of Norwich, Stamford, and Bristol are there significant numbers of pre-Reformation memorials, and these mainly brasses.[41] In the churches of Coventry and Winchester, Southampton, Nottingham, and York hardly any monuments of pre-Reformation date have survived, while in those of London nearly all the medieval monuments were consumed in the Great Fire. From the evidence of the antiquaries, however, we can see that the churches of England's major cities were once packed with monuments. The town churches probably contained considerably more monuments than the churches of the countryside, where monuments now

[37] BL, Egerton MS 3310A, published as 'A Book of Church Notes by John Philipot, Somerset Herald', ed. C. R. Councer, in *A Seventeenth Century Miscellany* (Kent Records, 17, 1960); BL, Egerton MS 3510 (Burton's notes, 1603–41). Also important in this connection are Randle Holme's notes from Cheshire: BL, Harley MS 2151. *The Chorography of Norfolk*, ed. C. M. Hood (Norwich, 1938), is useful for that county.

[38] BL, Add. MS 71474. For discussion, see P. Whittemore, 'Sir William Dugdale's "Book of Draughts"', *CM* 18 (2003), 23–52.

[39] *Dodsworth's Church Notes, 1619–1631*, ed. J. W. Clay (Yorkshire Archaeological Soc. Record Series, 34, 1904).

[40] J. F. Williams, 'The Brasses of York Minster', *TMBS* 7 (1934–42), 342–52; 8 (1943–51), 1–8.

[41] In a different category perhaps are the college chapels of Oxford and Cambridge.

survive in greater number. In one London church alone, St Thomas Acon, Stow recorded no fewer than 23 monuments, and in another, St James Garlickhythe, 22.[42] In one York church, All Saints, North St, a seventeenth-century antiquary recorded nearly a dozen.[43] Much less is known about the state of affairs in other main towns, but there can be little doubt that it was much the same.

The antiquarian evidence also sheds light on the scale of commemoration in the cathedrals. The great cathedrals suffered worse than the smaller rural churches from the ravages of destruction in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—particularly the latter. We have seen that in or shortly after the Great Civil War a clean sweep was made of the contents and fittings of many of England's most ancient minsters: at Hereford no fewer than 170 brasses are said to have been taken away by the parliamentary forces.[44] The cull of brasses at this time was particularly severe: brasses could easily be prised up to be sold off for scrap. Sculpted monuments, because more bulky, stood a better chance of survival. From the notes of antiquaries like Weever and Dodsworth and, above all, from the magnificent visual record of Sedgwick for Dugdale we can gain an insight into the riches we have lost. In a cathedral like Lincoln, which today has no medieval brasses, there were once dozens, if not hundreds (Fig. 10). A sense of the sheer number of brasses at Lincoln before the Reformation can be gained from Robert Sanderson's extensive listing of 1641.[45] Only Sedgwick's elegant (even elegiac) drawings, however, afford us a proper appreciation of just how magnificent these memorials were, particularly those of the canons. Unfortunately, for no other cathedral do we have as good a record as we have for Lincoln; only Dugdale's *History of St Paul's* begins to offers a match with its extensive series of engravings by Hollar.[46] For the most part our information relates to the scale of the losses, not what the losses comprised. The message conveyed by our sources, however, is altogether clear. The cathedrals contained tombs and brasses now lost—particularly brasses—of supreme artistic distinction. Prestigious buildings in the Middle Ages attracted prestigious monuments. What has been swept away almost certainly represented the cream of the tomb makers' output.

The churches least well covered by our sources are the monastic and mendicant houses. These were dissolved before the process of recording began in earnest. The only detailed pre-Reformation account we have of the monuments in a monastery is the account from St Albans, although in one or two cases information on monuments is preserved incidentally in cartularies. For a small number of houses

[42] Stow, *Survey of London*, i. 249, 269.

[43] BL, Lansdowne MS 919, fo. 14^{v}. The notes date from *c*.1659.

[44] M. H. Bloxam, 'On Certain Sepulchral Effigies in Hereford Cathedral', *Archaeological Jnl.* 34 (1877), 409. For a survey of the remaining brasses in the cathedral and a more detailed discussion of the losses, see P. Heseltine and H. Martin Stuchfield, *The Monumental Brasses of Hereford Cathedral* (London, 2005).

[45] H. K. St J. Sanderson, 'Lincoln Cathedral'.

[46] W. Dugdale, *The History of St Paul's Cathedral in London* (London, 1658). For discussion of the medieval monuments of St Paul's, see C. D. Cragoe, 'Fabric, Tombs and Precinct, 1087–1540', in D. Keene, A. Burns, A. Saint (eds.), *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London, 604–2004* (New Haven and London, 2004).

Figure 10. Lincoln Cathedral: floor of the south choir aisle

there are lists of monuments written some years after the Reformation by writers who drew on earlier sources. For a few other houses we have burial lists which go some way to making good the gaps in our knowledge; for example, we have a near-complete burial list for one of the most popular houses in the capital, the Grey Friars.[47] The strong impression given by this assortment of sources is that the most prestigious conventual churches were again densely packed with monuments. A small number of these were saved at the Reformation, generally by relatives or descendants of the deceased. The tomb of Henry Bourchier, earl of Essex, for example, was removed from Beeleigh Abbey, near Maldon (Essex), to Little

[47] Shepherd, 'Church of the Friars Minors in London'. See also Stow, *Survey of London*, i. 322, for the destruction of tombs in the church.

Easton, some miles away.[48] The monuments of the Lords Roos were removed from Croxden Abbey and Belvoir Priory to the parish church of Bottesford (Leics.).[49] The monument of William Maidstone was removed from Leeds Priory to Ulcombe church by Arthur St Leger, the penultimate prior and later parson of Ulcombe.[50] An important group of monuments was removed from Lewes Priory: the Tournai marble slab commemorating Gundrada, the founder's wife, to Isfield and later to St John's, Southover (Fig. 7), a couple of monuments of the Fitzalans to Chichester Cathedral, and the magnificent brass of Prior Neland to rural Cowfold.[51] Where, however, there was no relative on hand to act, the monuments perished. Some of these are likely to have been monuments of exceptional distinction. Bisham Abbey once had a magnificent series of monuments to the Montagu earls of Salisbury, patrons of the house, known to us from wills and, in one case, from a pair of contracts.[52] At Bury St Edmunds Abbey there was the tomb of Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter (d. 1426), and his wife, for the making of which the duke left the considerable sum of £100.[53] At Bury St Edmunds, too, there was the tomb of the retired soldier Sir William Elmham (d. 1403)—another monument likely to have been on the grand scale.[54] As in the cathedrals, the cream of the lost monuments are likely to have been ones of the highest quality and distinction.[55]

Today the great majority of medieval monuments are to be found in small, rural parish churches. These are the monuments which, by virtue of their relative isolation, escaped destruction in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the centuries before the religious crises, however, it is clear that as many, or more, monuments would have been found in the higher-status churches and the churches of the towns and cities. The heavy representation of the country gentry on extant monuments is a consequence of the uneven incidence of survival. Had tombs and brasses survived in greater number from the monasteries and the urban churches, groups such as the senior clergy, the higher nobility, and the burgess class would have been represented more strongly. It has been calculated that before the Civil War there were at least 2,500 monuments in London, of which fewer than 2 per cent survive.[56] In the churches of London and the other cities the majority of the

[48] W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Essex* (2 vols., London, 2003), i. 236.

[49] Lindley, '"Disrespect for the Dead"', 64–5, where other examples are also cited.

[50] N. E. Saul, 'William Maidstone at Ulcombe and Leeds', *TMBS* 16 (1998), 132–8; D. MacCulloch, 'Moving with the Times?', *MBS Bulletin*, 84 (May 2000), 495–6.

[51] F. Anderson, '"Uxor Mea": The First Wife of the First William of Warenne', *Sussex Archaeological Colls.* 130 (1992), 107–29; H. Tummers, 'The Medieval Effigial Tombs in Chichester Cathedral', *CM* 3 (1988), 29–36; C. E. D. Davidson-Houston, 'Sussex Monumental Brasses, II', *Sussex Archaeological Colls.* 77 (1936), 149–52.

[52] See below, 89, 108. [53] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 361.

[54] Norwich Record Office, NCC Will Register (Harsyk), fo. 288r.

[55] A number of the monuments to the de Vere earls of Oxford, once in Earls Colne Priory, were moved to St Stephen's Chapel, Bures, in 1935.

[56] This is the calculation of Christian Steer on the evidence of testamentary records and Stow's *Survey of London*.

monuments are likely to have been fairly small because of the constraints of space. In monasteries which enjoyed high aristocratic patronage monuments on the grand scale would have been the dominant feature. The series of tombs to the Despensers in Tewkesbury Abbey gives an idea of what commemoration would have been like in a well-connected monastery. The surviving distribution profile, tilted as it is towards parish churches in the countryside, probably under-represents elite monuments. It would be wrong to say that what we are left with is a body without a head. However, the head which we see today is almost certainly somewhat shrunken in size.

It may be possible, too, to offer a few observations on the chronological distribution of monuments before the period of loss. The surviving corpus of medieval funerary sculpture shows a heavy leaning towards the later part of the period. Tombs of early date—in particular, tombs of non-effigial type—are almost certainly under-represented. A number of reasons may be offered for this. The most obvious is that early monuments in so many cases fell victim to the process of rebuilding and restoration later. A predictably heavy toll was exacted in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when cross slabs, objects of little artistic value in restorers' eyes, were often destroyed or cast out with builders' rubbish. The process of loss, however, did not begin in the age of the 'restorers'. It seems to have begun well before then. In the late Middle Ages a major cause of loss was the building boom in the wool and cloth churches of southern England, which resulted in the dispersal of many early monuments. Sometimes fragments of early cross slabs were incorporated in the later fabrics.[57] But generally the pattern is of low, or relatively low, survival of early slabs in the prosperous areas of Gloucestershire and East Anglia.[58] Monuments of early date stood a far better chance of survival where there was little or no late medieval rebuilding of fabrics.

A second cause of loss in the pre-Reformation period is to be found in the problem of overcrowding in small urban churches. By the fifteenth century early monuments were constantly being removed to provide space for new ones. In 1456–7 gravestones from the floors of St Michael's, Cornhill, London, were being disposed of by the churchwardens, while at the end of the century and early in the next sales are recorded at St Mary Underhill, St Lawrence, Pountney, and St Mary Magdalen, Milk St, all in London. In one case a slab apparently complete with its brass inlays was sold off.[59] In churches where the pressure for space was severe, little resistance was offered by the authorities to the removal of gravestones once the obits to which they related had expired.

One last factor in the loss of early monuments may be suggested, and that is the closure and despoiling of the monasteries in the 1530s. Between the eleventh century and the thirteenth, when the monasteries were virtually unchallenged

[57] No fewer than eleven cross slabs are built into the tower at Kemble (Glos.).

[58] Jon Bayliss's searches of East Anglian churches are, however, identifying a larger number of cross slabs in that area than might be expected, many of them turned over and reset.

[59] S. Badham, 'Medieval Greens: Recycling Brasses and their Slabs', *MBS Bulletin*, 93 (May 2003), 673–4.

as providers of institutional intercession, burial in monastic precincts had been a privilege much sought after. Many of the layfolk buried in monasteries—the family and descendants of the founder, the honorial baronage and members of the knightly class—were people who in a later age would have been buried in parish churches. Before the fourteenth century, it was in the monasteries that monuments to the nobility and notability—that is, high-status monuments—would have been concentrated in greatest number. A number of monasteries pursued a conscious policy of offering the privilege of burial within their walls in return for gifts of advowsons. In those monastic churches which have come down to us intact considerable numbers of early slabs and effigies are still to be seen. At sites which are now ruinous, such memorials have been uncovered by excavation—as at Furness and Rievaulx. It is known that the production of cross slabs in the early Middle Ages ran at very high levels. Yet it has also been estimated that no more than about 10 per cent of all such slabs have survived.[60] Had a greater quantity of evidence come down to us from monastic sites, particularly for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the rate of production of such slabs might well seem even higher than it does already. At Bardney Abbey (Lincs.) in the excavations of 1909–12 over fifty cross slabs and incised slabs of various dates were uncovered.[61] It is unlikely that the scale of commemoration at Bardney was in the least degree exceptional.

PATRONAGE

In conclusion, can any observations be made about the distribution of monuments across social classes in the Middle Ages? Despite centuries of losses, a large number of monuments have come down to us from the medieval period. We have seen that it is likely that more medieval memorials survive in England than anywhere else in Europe. Can we tell who were the main patrons of funerary sculpture, and how far down society the patron class extended?

The surviving evidence suggests that the patronage of monuments was widely distributed across society. Commemoration by a monument or grave marker was a practice which began in the early Middle Ages as an elite activity but was quickly imitated lower down. The sheer number of gravestones to have survived from the pre-Conquest period points to a patron class even then expanding rapidly at the lower end. The people commemorated before 1066 are likely to have included lesser thegns—members of the proto-gentry class—and not just clergy or members of the aristocracy. The evidence of an active market in cross slabs and other monuments from the late twelfth century likewise points to a large and expanding patron class. The appetite for commemoration was fuelled by a general increase in prosperity which swelled demand at the middle and lower levels. By

[60] Ryder, *Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in West Yorkshire*, 5.

[61] Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, i. 311, 312, 313, 324; ii. 2. I am grateful to Sally Badham for much information on Bardney.

the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it is no longer possible to think of monuments as an elite cultural form. The market was extending far down into the middle and lower-middle ranks of society.[62] The notion of an expanding client class applies with as much force to the clergy as to the laity. The market for monuments included ordinary parish priests as well as the rich pluralists and holders of well-endowed prebends.

By the later Middle Ages a hierarchy of honour had emerged in funerary commemoration. New elite monuments were developed to allow high-status clients to differentiate themselves from their inferiors. Tomb chests, a conspicuously expensive form of commemoration, were patronized by the very wealthiest as a means of emphasizing their high social position; floor slabs were left for the less well-off. A hierarchy of honour in materials reinforced the hierarchy of typology. Gilt metal was recognized as the material generally appropriate for effigies of patrons of the highest rank, while alabaster and freestone were associated with the titled aristocracy and baronage.[63] Brasses began to decline in status to some extent by the sixteenth century. Once a commemorative medium widely patronized by the knightly class, they were losing out by now to sculpted effigies on tomb chests. Those of the lowest rank were free to commission such monuments as they could afford. In most cases this meant either a small brass or a stone or alabaster cross slab. To this extent, the hierarchy was defined by means. If simple memorials were held in low esteem, it was partly because those who commissioned them were of low esteem.

The development in the thirteenth century of the separate inlay brass may have given a spur to the spread of commemoration. The use of the separate inlay technique made brasses an unusually flexible commemorative medium: they could be manufactured as large or as small, as simple or as elaborate, as the client could afford. On the Continent, except in eastern Germany, brasses generally took the form of large rectangular plates. This limited their appeal because they could not so easily be customized. In England the assembling of a brass from a number of component parts meant that the needs of poorer clients could easily be accommodated. The tiny inscription to Nicolas Dade at Witton (Norfolk), four inches by three, shows just how modest a late medieval brass could be. Since at least the tenth century the patron class for monuments had embraced the middling groups of society—the gentry and those immediately below. In the late Middle Ages it appears to have undergone further expansion thanks

[62] For the small late medieval civilian brasses commemorating people at this level, see below, 251–60.

[63] Gilt metal was used for a group of royal effigies—those of Henry III, Eleanor of Castile, Edward III, and Richard II at Westminster Abbey, and of the Black Prince at Canterbury; it was also used for one non-royal secular effigy, Richard Beauchamp's at Warwick. Its association with secular distinction, however, was not exclusive. It was also used for a few effigies of ecclesiastics, all now lost (Dean Langton at York and a series of bishops at Wells). It is also worth noting that cast metal was used for Archbishop Sudbury's effigy at Canterbury (likewise now lost), to make the point that he was a martyr: he had been murdered in the Peasants' Revolt. For this monument, see C. Wilson, 'The Medieval Monuments', in P. Collinson, N. Ramsay, M. Sparks (eds.), *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), 472.

largely to the popularity of the brass. Lesser gentry, freeholders, and craftsmen were now included. When, as at Brightwell Baldwin (Oxon.), in the case of John the Smyth *c*.1370, a peasant or yeoman farmer could seek commemoration, there can be no doubting the extent of cultural homogeneity in late medieval England.[64]

[64] W. J. Blair, 'John Smith of Brightwell Baldwin', *MBS Bulletin*, 81 (May 1999), 431.

4

The Production of Monuments

By as early as the mid-eleventh century the production of funerary sculpture ranked among the most significant of stone-related industries in England. In areas rich in stone, such as the northern counties, levels of production were already high enough to make an impact on the local economy. In the late Middle Ages the production of tomb sculpture was often linked with the production of related media, such as statuary and stained glass. The personnel, geography, and organization of the medieval funerary sculpture industry are still only imperfectly understood. Documentary evidence for the production of funerary monuments, particularly in the years before 1300, is disappointingly thin. Various categories of evidence have to be tapped for what they can reveal about the trade. The most important of these are the documentary sources—notably contracts, wills, and the records of litigation; but also valuable are petrology (the analysis of stones) and the stylistic analysis of the monuments themselves. Scattered and inadequate as this body of evidence is, it is none the less indicative of wide variation in the organization of the trade. Brass engraving emerges as highly centralized, making use of standardized designs and the techniques of mass production. The manufacture of cross slabs, sculpted effigies, and incised slabs appears, by contrast, decentralized, distributed across quarry-based workshops and schools of travelling sculptors.

CROSS SLABS

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the most common monumental type was the cross slab grave cover, a simple but not necessarily a low-status memorial. Cross slabs are the least well documented of all the categories of monument in use in the Middle Ages. Their production took place in a world of face-to-face contact with clients, which generated virtually no documentation. Any reconstruction of the organization of production therefore has to depend on the evidence of the slabs themselves—the uniformity or otherwise of their designs, the pattern of their distribution, and the stone of which they are made. Peter Ryder's county-by-county listings of slabs in northern England bring together the essential raw materials for study of the slabs in that area.[1] For slabs in the east Midlands, Laurence Butler's

[1] P. Ryder, *The Medieval Cross Slab Grave Cover in County Durham* (Architectural and Archaeological Soc. of Durham and Northumberland, Research Report, 1, 1985); *Medieval Cross*

studies of the Barnack series and their imitators are a key source.[2] Important listings of Purbeck marble cross slabs, compiled by B. and M. Gittos, S. Badham, and P. Lankester, were published in the Church Monuments Society *Newsletter* between 1994 and 2003.

Down to the early fourteenth century the prestige end of the market in cross slabs in southern and eastern England was dominated by the production of slabs of polished marble from Purbeck (Dorset). Some 800 examples of such slabs have been recorded in locations ranging across cathedrals, abbeys, and parish churches. Examples have been found as far afield as Ireland and Normandy.

For many years it was assumed that the carving of these slabs was carried out in the village of Corfe Castle itself. Recent research on properties in West Street, Corfe, however, has suggested that manufacturing in the village may have been confined to small items like mortars.[3] The carving of much larger architectural components and monuments is more likely to have been carried out at quarry sites in the surrounding countryside. At a disused quarry at Quarr Farm, near Corfe, blocks of stone survive with medieval tool marks, indicating that block-quarrying, if not finer work, was done there, while at Downshay near by partially completed components, including a moulded column base, have been found among the rubble. These finds suggest that Downshay at least was a manufacturing as well as a quarrying site. Evidence for fine working, in the form of marble rubble and fine chippings, has also been found along the marble outcrop in woods near Langton Maltravers, south of Corfe. An important reason for the success of the Corfe marble industry may have been its coastal location, which allowed products to be taken by ship to London, East Anglia, and a variety of other destinations.

A major development in the trade was the settlement of Corfe marblers in London from the mid-thirteenth century under the stimulus of the royal works at Westminster and elsewhere in the metropolis. One of these men, Adam of Corfe, dominated the London trade between *c*.1305 and his death in 1331.[4] The London-based marblers maintained links with their counterparts at Corfe, sometimes working in association with them. Some later cross slabs appear to have

Slab Grave Covers in West Yorkshire (Wakefield, 1991); 'Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Northumberland, 1–3', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 28–32 (2000–3); *Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Cumbria* (Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Soc., extra series, 32 (2005)).

[2] L. A. S. Butler, 'Medieval Gravestones of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, and the Soke of Peterborough', *Proc. Cambridge Antiquarian Soc.* 50 (1957), 89–100; 'Minor Medieval Monumental Sculpture in the East Midlands', *Archaeological Jnl.* 121 (1965), 111–53. Mention should also be made of: M. Edwards, 'Medieval Cross Slabs and Coffin Lids in North Lancashire', *Contrebis*, 5 (1977), 1–22; R. F. Butler and L. J. Jones, 'The Cross Slabs of Gloucestershire', *Trans. Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Soc.* 11 (1972), 150–8.

[3] For the industry at Purbeck, see R. Leach, *An Investigation into the Use of Purbeck Marble in Medieval England* (2nd edn., privately printed, 1978); J. Blair, 'Purbeck Marble', in J. Blair and N. Ramsay (eds.), *English Medieval Industries* (London, 1991), 41–56; S. Badham, 'Evidence for the Minor Funerary Monument Industry, 1100–1500', in K. Giles and C. Dyer (eds.), *Town and Country in the Middle Ages: Contrasts, Contacts and Interconnections, 1100–1500* (Leeds, 2005), 165–95, especially 179–81.

[4] For Adam, see below, 76.

been carved at Corfe, sent to London, and embellished there with the addition of inscriptions. An early fourteenth-century Purbeck slab at Clothall (Herts.) had two inscriptions added, both in styles used by the London marblers but each from a different pattern series.[5] It is possible therefore that part at least of the Purbeck marble funerary sculpture industry, initially totally quarry-based and thus rural, eventually became an urban trade with rural links.

The only other producers of cross slabs operating on a scale comparable to those at Purbeck were the workshops alongside the Barnack quarries near Stamford. These had their own quay and landing staithes at Gunwade on the Nene, from which their products were dispatched inland up the Cam and the Ouse or downstream to the Wash and then onto the network of waterways in the Fens and East Anglia. Barnack cross slabs enjoyed considerable prestige in the Midlands in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Their distinguishing feature was the ribbon-like 'double omega' motif on the cross stem (Fig. 8). Yet the appearance of this motif on a slab does not necessarily prove that it is of Barnack origin. Butler has shown that the motif was copied on slabs produced in other quarries in the east Midlands and as far afield as Bedfordshire. Remarkably, it also makes an appearance on a wooden cross slab at Guestwick (Norfolk). Lesser craftsmen borrowed or appropriated designs to assist in the marketing of their own products.

The Purbeck and Barnack workshops were exceptional in terms of their extended markets. In the more distant parts of England not served by these workshops the pattern of production was very different. A multiplicity of craftsmen and workshops supplied local, largely rural, markets, satisfying a demand for simple, low-cost monuments. Two main systems of production appear to have operated.[6] One was the quarry-based system, such as that developed pre-eminently at Barnack. In these arrangements the stone would be extracted as rough blocks by hewers, dressed to shape by 'scapplers' or cutters, and then carved with their distinctive designs by specialist masons. At the major quarry-based workshops the designs would have been worked from copybook patterns or templates. Marketing would have been over an area essentially defined by the need to ensure that transport costs did not add excessively to the cost of production.

In areas such as the north-western counties, where workable freestone was widely available, the pattern of production would probably have been different. In these areas the majority of slabs would have been carved on stone quarried within a few miles of their eventual destination. Quarries were regularly being opened for building projects such as the extension of a church or construction of a manor house, and slabs suitable for use as monuments would have been set aside to be worked on. The detailed carving would have been carried out by a local mason or a journeyman apprentice who had not yet set up as a master and who travelled around in search of employment. In the most isolated areas, such as the Pennines

[5] S. Badham, 'Evidence for the Minor Funerary Monument Industry, 1100–1500', in K. Giles and C. Dyer (eds.), *Town and Country in the Middle Ages: Contrasts, Contacts and Interconnections, 1100–1500* (Leeds, 2005), 181.

[6] Ryder, *Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in West Yorkshire*, 2–5.

and the Lake District, the carving of slabs may well have been undertaken by local masons of little experience, their inadequacy revealed in the crude carving and clumsy design of their work.

FREESTONE EFFIGIES

At first sight, the production of freestone sculpted effigies presents a very different model from the loosely organized structures associated with the making of cross slabs. Sculpted effigies seem to belong to a world of larger, more specialized production than the unassuming stone slabs. They were often the centrepieces of elaborate compositions of which a variety of accessories, such as canopies, also formed part. Their very size and the quality of craftsmanship required to produce them seem to point to workshops of some magnitude and complexity.

Such an impression tends to be reinforced by the documentation which has come down to us relating to production. Virtually all the contracts and receipts which have survived from before 1500 relate to monuments produced in big London workshops. Best known are the two contracts for the tomb of Richard II and his queen in Westminster Abbey which indicate Henry Yevele and Stephen Lote as responsible for the chest, and Nicholas Broker and Godfrey Prest for the gilt bronze effigies.[7] From twenty years earlier is the contract with Henry Lakenham 'marbler' for the tomb chest and effigy of Sir Nicholas Loveine (d. 1375) in St Mary Grace's, near the Tower of London.[8] Contemporary with the Lakenham contract is the order placed by John of Gaunt with Yevele and Thomas Wrek, for a monument, now lost, to himself and his first wife in St Paul's Cathedral.[9] All this evidence points to a large-scale funerary sculpture industry based in or around the metropolis. London tomb makers tended to specialize in the making of elite commissions for high-status clients. Middling or lesser clients, while still using the metropolitan firms, could also contact tomb makers at workshops in the provinces. By analogy with the position in London, it could be argued that these tomb makers would also have been based mainly in big urban centres. Wherever big building projects were being undertaken, there are likely to have been masons sculpting funerary effigies as a sideline. The effigy at Salisbury of William Longespée (Fig. 20) has clear affinities with the statues on the west front of Wells Cathedral.

Such assumptions about the pattern of production underpin the picture in the classic study of Prior and Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure-Sculpture in England*.[10] Prior and Gardner saw tomb production in the Middle Ages as

[7] T. Rymer, *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae, etc.*, ed. G. Holmes (20 vols., London, 1704–35), vii. 795–8. The contracts were placed in April 1395.

[8] J. Blair, 'Henry Lakenham, Marbler of London, and a Tomb Contract of 1376', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 60 (1980), 66–74.

[9] J. Harvey, *English Medieval Architects: A Biographical Dictionary down to 1550* (2nd edn., Gloucester, 1984), 360.

[10] E. S. Prior and A. Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure-Sculpture in England* (Cambridge, 1912).

essentially the work of schools centred in towns, particularly towns with big churches. In the west they saw the main production centre in the years around 1300 as being at Bristol, the source of what they identified as a distinct 'south-west' style. Before 1300, they suggested, there were probably also workshops at Exeter, and perhaps later at Gloucester and Hereford. In the north-east they saw York as the most important 'centre for sculpture craft'. They conceded that effigies were probably produced by masons engaged in work on the cathedrals of Durham and Carlisle; in each case, however, 'the school of these men's art would have been the workshops of York'. In the Midlands they considered Lichfield as occupying a similarly important position to York's further north, though in the late Middle Ages lesser Midland workshops may have developed at Coventry, Nottingham, and Leicester. In the south-east London's position was without challenge. For Prior and Gardner, the funerary sculpture industry was thus overwhelmingly urban-based. Even where, as in the east Midlands, production was centred on quarries, it was through towns that tomb sculpture was distributed: thus Peterborough and Lincoln acted as the main distribution centres for the products of the Barnack and Ancaster quarries.

Such a reconstruction, while intellectually attractive, is open to a number of objections. In the first place, it finds little or no support in the extant documentary sources. With the exception of London, in none of the major towns mentioned by Prior and Gardner is there any evidence of masons engaging in the production of freestone effigies. If masons occasionally engaged in the carving of effigies in response to ad hoc commissions, in no town or city did this activity lead to the establishment of permanent workshops. Even in London, where tomb-making is well attested in the late fourteenth century, there is no evidence that it continued after the death of Stephen Lote in 1418.

Secondly, the stylistic evidence is rarely convincing enough to support the notion of sequences of tombs produced in major urban centres over periods of time. Prior and Gardner based their argument for Bristol as a major centre on the work of Alfred Fryer, who had suggested that a group of sculptors had moved there from Wells, establishing a workshop which produced distinctive effigies in the local Dundry stone. B. and M. Gittos have subjected Fryer's analysis to searching criticism from a number of perspectives.[11] Their analysis of the stones used has shown that a number of the effigies are not of Dundry stone but of other oolites such as Doulting or a shelly limestone such as Ham Hill, weakening the case for Bristol as a major production centre. In addition, they have argued that a number of the comparisons between effigies which Fryer made lack validity, undermining his view of Bristol as a large-scale centre of production serving the needs of a wide area. If there was a significant workshop in the thirteenth century in the south-west, they conclude, there is no direct evidence that it was based at Bristol; nor is there evidence to suggest that any such workshop was as influential or productive as Prior

[11] B. and M. Gittos, 'Alfred Fryer's "Monumental Effigies by Bristol Craftsmen": A Reassesment', in L. Keen (ed.), *'Almost the Richest City': Bristol in the Middle Ages* (BAA Conference Transactions, 19, 1997), 88–96.

and Gardner maintained. If the case for an essentially urban-based industry cannot be sustained for Bristol, it is unlikely to be sustainable for any other major town.

A more plausible hypothesis is to see the making of sculpted effigies as largely quarry-based in the manner of the making of cross slabs. Such a suggestion makes excellent sense on a priori grounds. The carriage of stone was expensive, particularly where no convenient river routes were available. There was nothing to be gained from carting heavy stone to a town when it could be carved close to the quarry and the figure taken on completion directly to its destination. We have seen that a variety of different limestones were employed in making the effigies once attributed to the 'Bristol' sculptors. A convenient explanation for this is readily to hand if we assume the effigies to have been carved in workshops based near quarries where the stone originated. The effigies, though generally found near Bristol, probably had no connection with that city at all—except, in some cases, to the extent of passing through it as a distribution centre. Similarly, in Lincolnshire the distinctive sunken effigies, which are a feature of the sculpture of that county (Fig. 9), are more likely to have been made in workshops close to the Ancaster quarries, where the stone originated, than at workshops twelve miles away at Lincoln. In general, where similar-looking effigies of the same stone are found in close proximity, they are most likely to be the products of a quarry-based workshop. In Yorkshire the many pre-Black Death effigies carved in magnesian limestone of the type found near Tadcaster are likely to have come from the Tadcaster quarries rather than from York, a city for which there is no evidence of the presence of tomb sculptors. Equally, the Yorkshire series 'E' effigies, which are all of a gritty sandstone from the Guisborough area, are almost certainly of local, not urban, origin. It is possible that they are the work of craftsmen who came to the area to work on Guisborough Priory.[12]

If the quarry workshop model explains the origins of a good many medieval effigies, the close study of stone types suggests another possible model of production to sit beside it. This is the hypothesis of stone carvers travelling around to churches to work on site. A number of local studies have highlighted coherent stylistic groupings of effigies which are yet carved in different stone types.[13] In south Gloucestershire and mid-Oxfordshire, localities some way apart, there is a set of fourteenth-century effigies which all appear to be the work of the same craftsmen. These include the effigies of Sir Robert de Bradeston and his wife (*c*.1352) and Sir Richard de la Riviere (d. 1361), all at Winterbourne (Glos.), and Sir Thomas de la More and his wife (*c*.1350) at Northmoor (Oxon.). All five figures are carved from an oolitic limestone. The Gloucestershire effigies, however, are of stones from the Bath or Painswick areas, while their Northmoor counterparts are of a local oolite from the Windrush valley. The most likely explanation for this use of different materials is that the sculptor, while based in a town or quarry, travelled around to execute his commissions. Medieval masons tended to use local stones wherever possible, to reduce the cost of transport. At Aldworth (Berks.), in the

[12] B. and M. Gittos, 'The Ingleby Arncliffe Group of Effigies: A Mid Fourteenth-Century Workshop in North Yorkshire', *CM* 17 (2002), 14–38.

[13] S. Badham, forthcoming.

same period, the group of eight effigies commemorating the de la Beche family, although exhibiting the stylistic characteristics of Exeter-based sculptors, are carved from stone types of local origin.[14] Notable for its absence from the Aldworth series is the famous Beer stone of Devon, in which the sculptors might be expected to have worked if the tombs had been produced at Exeter itself.

A recent analysis of the tomb of Laurence Hastings, earl of Pembroke (d. 1348), at Abergavenny Priory has lent support to the idea of work carried out on site.[15] Both the chest and effigy of the monument are of Painswick stone from mid-Gloucestershire. The effigy appears to have been carved at the Painswick quarries. On the chest supporting it, however, there is evidence of a change of plan on site which points to some of the carving being executed there. Originally, to judge from the extant fabric, it seems that the intention was to carve the weepers on the sides from the same huge blocks of stone as the chest itself; one weeper on the south side was carved in this way. It was soon found, however, that this was a cumbersome way of carrying out the work, particularly when the tomb occupied a cramped position on the south side of the choir. Accordingly, a change was made: all the other weepers were carved from separate pieces of stone and then set in place.

It is likely that close analysis of other tombs will shed light on methods of production and construction. In the absence of documentary evidence it is only through detailed case studies that advances in our understanding will be made. For the moment, what can be said for certain is that the notion of urban-based schools of sculpture espoused by Prior and Gardner is no longer tenable. Production was loosely structured and decentralized, an aspect of rural economic activity as much as of urban.

ALABASTER MONUMENTS

One of the most popular tomb-making materials in the late Middle Ages was alabaster. In the course of the fourteenth century the carving of this material developed into a significant small-scale industry producing religious imagery and tomb effigies. Among patrons of tombs, alabaster was prized for its bright luminous quality, which made it a convenient substitute for white marble, highly esteemed in France but not available in England.

By the early fifteenth century the alabasterers were producing a wide range of products—portable altars, reredoses, images and, most successfully, the small devotional panels which found such a receptive market at home and abroad.[16]

[14] This is the conclusion drawn from an analysis of the stones made by Tim Palmer and Philip Powell. For Aldworth, see also below, 134.

[15] P. Lindley, 'Two Fourteenth-Century Tomb Monuments at Abergavenny and the Mournful End of the Hastings Earls of Pembroke', in J. R. Kenyon and D. M. Williams (eds.), *Cardiff: Architecture and Archaeology in the Medieval Diocese of Llandaff* (BAA Conference Transactions, 29, 2006), 136–60.

[16] N. Ramsay, 'Alabaster', in J. Blair and N. Ramsay (eds.), *English Medieval Industries* (London, 1991), 29–40.

Tomb effigies appear to have figured early on in their output, certainly well before the ubiquitous panels and images. Although in the fifteenth century the industry was to be based principally in the Midlands, the earliest surviving tomb effigies are the work of metropolitan, not local, sculptors. The earliest products of note are the effigy of King Edward II at Gloucester (Fig. 33) and the effigy and weepers on the tomb of John of Eltham, earl of Cornwall, in Westminster Abbey. Both of these works exhibit the cool, austere aesthetic of work associated with court art. Alabaster effigies are certainly known to have been made in the Midlands by the middle years of the century; the earliest such survival is probably the figure of Sir Henry Hambury, *c*.1346, at Hanbury (Staffs.).[17] Alabaster effigies, however, are few in number and appear to have been produced in workshops which specialized in the production of freestone monuments.[18] Much the best-attested alabaster-carving activity in the fourteenth century is found in the capital. In 1359 William Ramsey's workshop was responsible for producing a tomb of alabaster commemorating Queen Isabella, Edward II's widow, in the London Grey Friars.[19] In 1362 Queen Philippa, Edward III's wife, had six carts of alabaster brought for her use from Tutbury to London, while twelve years later the duke of Lancaster commissioned alabaster effigies of himself and his first wife from the London workshop of Yevele and Wrek.[20] Quite possibly, the three alabaster effigies commissioned by King Robert II of Scotland for his wife, father, and grandfather in Paisley Abbey in the late 1370s came from a workshop in the capital.[21] There are hints that the big London workshops may have maintained stocks of alabaster as a contingency in the event of possible commissions. In 1376 John Orchard, by trade a metalworker ('latoner'), could supply alabaster figures for the tombs of William of Windsor and Blanche of the Tower in Westminster Abbey.[22] Early in the next century a London carver, Robert Broun, probably a mason, was engaged to provide a tomb of alabaster and stone for an earl of Salisbury at Bisham Abbey.[23] It is the wealth of evidence for alabaster-carving in the capital which lends support to the view of London as a major tomb-making centre in the late Middle Ages.

Whether, or how far, this level of activity was maintained in the fifteenth century is by no means easy to establish. After the contract with Robert Broun there is no documentary evidence at all of alabaster tomb-making in the capital. The contrast with the level of activity in the previous century is striking. None the less, it is hard to suppose that the production of alabaster effigies there ceased entirely. There is a group of early fifteenth-century alabaster effigies in southern England which in

[17] C. Blair, 'The Date of the Early Alabaster Knight at Hanbury, Staffordshire', *CM* 7 (1992), 3–18.

[18] This seems to be the case with the so-called 'Eltham' group: L. Southwick, 'The Armoured Effigy of Prince John of Eltham in Westminster Abbey and some Closely Related Military Monuments', *CM* 2 (1987), 9–21.

[19] For these examples, see Ramsay, 'Alabaster'; W. H. St John Hope, 'On the Early Working of Alabaster in England', *Archaeological Jnl.* 61 (1904), 221–40.

[20] Ramsay, 'Alabaster', 31.

[21] *Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, ii. *1359–79*, ed. G. Burnett (Edinburgh, 1878), 348, 592, 622.

[22] A. Gardner, *Alabaster Tombs of the Pre-Reformation Period in England* (Cambridge, 1940), 7–8.

[23] G. M. Bark, 'A London Alabasterer in 1421', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 29 (1949), 89–91.

various ways stand outside the main series produced in the Midlands. These are the effigies of John, earl of Arundel (d. 1435) at Arundel (Sussex), Lady Margaret Holand (d. 1439) and her two husbands in Canterbury Cathedral, and Sir Reginald Cobham (d. 1446) and his wife at Lingfield (Surrey). All three monuments are of exceptional quality. What is striking is that in each case alabaster is used for the effigies alongside Purbeck marble or freestone for other parts of the monument—a freestone cadaver in the case of the Arundel monument, a marble or stone chest in the case of the other two. This combination of contrasting materials points to the tombs' origin in a workshop which worked principally in freestone but which could draw on alabaster when needed.[24] We have already seen that in the late fourteenth century some at least of the London workshops maintained stocks of alabaster alongside those of freestone. In the second quarter of the fifteenth century this practice may have been maintained. After this time, however, it almost certainly ceased. There is no physical or documentary evidence to suggest that alabaster effigies were any longer being made in the capital.

By the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the main centres of alabaster tomb production were to be found in provincial England. In the early 1400s there was a workshop operating at or near York, which produced monuments with distinctive chests at Harewood and Methley (Yorks.).[25] This workshop had probably gone out of business by the early 1430s. For most of the fifteenth century the centre of gravity of the industry lay in the north Midlands. On the evidence of the distribution of effigies the main production centre was somewhere in the middle Trent valley.[26] The set of contractors who in 1408 produced an alabaster tomb for the duke of Brittany at Nantes—Thomas Colyn, Thomas Holewell, and Thomas Poppehowe, men otherwise unknown—were almost certainly based at a quarry in this locality.[27] By the end of the second decade of the century the first Midlands producers of alabaster tombs can be identified by name. These are

[24] Perhaps the workshop which produced two important non-alabaster monuments which can be stylistically associated with these—Archbishop Chichele's at Canterbury and the appropriated effigies thought to be the Hoo brothers, at Herstmonceux (Sussex), *c*.1455.

[25] The workshop produced the Waterton tomb at Methley (*c*.1424) and the Redman and Ryther tombs, the latter both *c*.1426, at Harewood: P. Routh and R. Knowles, 'The Medieval Monuments', in *All Saints' Church, Harewood, West Yorkshire* (London, 2004). Harewood possesses the finest surviving set of alabaster monuments in England, six in number. The later monuments are Midlands products, presumably shipped up the Trent and the Wharfe.

[26] From the late 14th and early 15th cent. there are the following monuments: Robert, Lord Willoughby (d. 1396), Spilsby (Lincs.); Sir Robert Cokefield (*c*.1395–9), Nuttall (Notts.); perhaps Sir John Conyers (*c*.1400), Hornby (Yorks.); Sir John Clifton (d. 1403), Clifton (Notts.); Sir Robert Gouxhill (d. 1403), Hoveringham (Notts.); John Wyard (d. 1404), Meriden (War.); a member of the Hilton family (*c*.1405), Swine (Yorks.); Sir John Bosville (*c*.1405), Darfield (Yorks.); Sir Sampson de Strelley (*c*.1405–10), Strelley (Notts.); Sir John Arderne (d. 1408), Elford (Staffs.); Sir John Mainwaring (d. 1410), Over Peover (Ches.); William Wilcotes (d. 1411), Northleigh (Oxon.); Sir William Marney (d. 1414), Layer Marney (Essex); the earl of Westmorland (d. 1425) Staindrop (Durham). The concentration of monuments in Nottinghamshire and adjoining counties is notable. The Trent, which empties into the Humber, provided access to Yorkshire. I am grateful to Jon Bayliss for help with this note.

[27] The tomb was commissioned by Joan of Navarre, the duke's widow, and second wife of Henry IV of England. A safe conduct issued for the conveyance of the tomb to Nantes gives the names of

the carvers Thomas Prentys and Robert Sutton, who worked at Chellaston, near Derby: the first-named being known to have been in business by 1414.[28] It was to the team of Prentys and Sutton that in 1419 Katherine Green awarded the contract for the making of her and her late husband's tomb at Lowick (Northants) (Fig. 11).[29] It was to the same team, likewise in that year, that Richard Hertcombe awarded the commission for the effigies for a monument to his former employer, the earl of Salisbury, the chest for which was to be made by Robert Broun in London.[30] The partnership between Prentys and Sutton was almost certainly a fairly loose one. The two men may have collaborated on important contracts as much to spread the financial risk as to share the workload. It is likely that the workshop, or workshops, which they ran were fairly small, consisting of two or three sculptors, perhaps with one or two assistants; there is no indication that they operated a large conglomerate. Sutton is known to have been active still in 1443, when he was sued by Sir Thomas Cumberworth for supplying alabaster which was

Figure 11. Lowick (Northants): Ralph Green and his wife, *c*.1419

those who made it but not their base (F. Crossley, *English Church Monuments A. D. 1150–1500* (London, 1921), 26–7).

[28] Stevenson, 'Art Sculpture in Alabaster, preserved in France, considered in its Relationship to the Nottingham School of Alabasterers', *Trans. Thoroton Soc*. 11 (1907), 89–98.

[29] Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 30.

[30] J. Bayliss, 'An Indenture for Two Alabaster Effigies', *CM* 16 (2001), 22–9.

allegedly impure ('immundus')—that is, not completely white.[31] The complaint may afford a sign that the reserves of best-quality alabaster at Chellaston were being exhausted by the 1440s and that no new supply in the immediate vicinity could be opened up.[32] The workshop of Prentys and Sutton and their team appears to have entered its final days in the early to mid-1450s. The tombs at Tong (Salop), *c*.1451, and Over Peover (Ches.), *c*.1456, are among its last products. At the time of the dispute with Cumberworth John Sutton, presumably Robert's son, was evidently still active. However, he could not have carried on for more than another decade. Prentys was by now either dead or retired. Chellaston as a significant tomb production centre passed into history after some forty years as home to one of England's most prolific workshops.

Tombs from the workshop of Prentys and Sutton are easily recognized. The firm had a trademark signature—the motif of a standing angel holding a shield placed in niches round the sides of the chest.[33] This motif is found on the one extant tomb with a documentary association with them, Ralph and Katherine Green's at Lowick. It is found on eight other tombs, including that of King Henry IV at Canterbury, which can likewise be attributed to the firm.[34] Prentys and Sutton presided over what was, by the 1430s, one of the most successful and productive alabaster workshops of its day. The quality of the men's craftsmanship was generally outstanding—at least, until they ran into problems with the supply of alabaster in the 1440s. The firm's most famous tomb, that at Lowick, may be considered one of the most accomplished alabaster monuments of the period. It is tantalizing, none the less, to think that there must once have been other products of theirs which were of even greater distinction still.

In the pre-Reformation period there are only two other Midlands alabaster tombmakers who can be identified by name. These are Henry Harpur and William Moorecock, who were based at Burton on Trent (Staffs.) in the early sixteenth century. A contract for one of the partners' tombs, which survives in transcript, provides a clue to identifying their work. This agreement, made in 1510, relates to the supply of an alabaster tomb chest with brasses (for which the work was sub-contracted) commemorating Henry Foljambe esquire at Chesterfield (Derby.).[35] The tomb is extant and has distinctive weepers in niches on the sides. According to the contract, the tomb was to be modelled on that of Sir Nicholas Montgomery at Great Cubley, further south in Derbyshire. This tomb chest too survives, albeit mutilated, and the two products resemble one another both in general aspect and in detail. On this evidence two other tombs can be firmly attributed to the Harpur

[31] P. Lindley, *Gothic to Renaissance: Essays on Sculpture in England* (Stamford, 1995), 26.

[32] I am again grateful to Jon Bayliss for his advice.

[33] C. Ryde, 'Chellaston Standing Angels with Shields at Aston on Trent: Their Wider Distribution, 1400–1450', *Derbyshire Archaeological Jnl.* 113 (1993), 69–90.

[34] The 'gablette' over the head is another distinctive feature. This is found on Bishop Stafford's monument at Exeter, where the chest, of stone, and evidently a London product, necessarily lacks the standing angel (Fig. 28).

[35] N. Johnston, 'Notices of the Family of Foljambe', *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, i (London, 1834), 354–5.

and Moorecock partnership. These are the chests and effigies of Thomas Babington (d. 1518) at Ashover and of William Blythe, *c*.1520, at Norton (both Derby.). A number of other possible attributions can also be suggested. The niche canopies on the Ashover and Norton tombs are very similar to those on chests at Castle Donington (Leics.), Clifton Campville (Staffs.), Duffield (Derby.), and Ross on Wye (Heref.) (Fig. 36). It seems more than likely that these monuments too were products of the workshop of Harpur and Moorecock.

On the retirement or deaths of Harpur and Moorecock, probably in the early 1530s, a new workshop arose at Burton under the 'alabasterman', Richard Parker.[36] Parker's workshop was actively engaged in tomb production until as late as the 1560s. Parker was joined in the Burton area in the mid-1530s by the two Royleys, Richard and Gabriel, perhaps brothers, who attained a dominant position in the trade and continued production to the 1590s.[37] By the mid-sixteenth century Burton was firmly established as the unofficial capital of alabaster tomb-making in England. Following the exhaustion of the quarries at Chellaston, the industry had shifted from a mainly rural to a mainly urban setting. In the late fifteenth century there is also evidence of tomb-making at Nottingham: in 1496 a Nottingham alabasterman Walter Hylton contracted to make an effigy for the tomb of King Richard III at Leicester;[38] how long production continued in this centre, however, is not known. Certainly, by the middle of the sixteenth century the days of quarry-based production belonged firmly to the past. The change to an urban-based industry was one which was characteristic of early modern tomb production in England more generally.

WOODEN EFFIGIES

A sizeable minority of sculpted effigies in the Middle Ages were of wood, and not stone. Some ninety-six wooden effigies have come down to us, and records exist of nearly two dozen more.[39] The majority of these date from the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries; there is a late cluster, however, dating from the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Wood (normally oak) as a material for effigy-making held a number of attractions for sculptors. In the first place, it provided an alternative to stone in areas such as eastern England, where stone was in short supply; second, it was lighter than stone and thus easier and cheaper to carry; and, finally, it was easier to carve. It seems likely that it was the physical properties of wood rather than its relative cheapness which explain its appeal as a medium for sculpture. What suggests this is that most of those commemorated by wooden

[36] J. Bayliss, 'Richard Parker "the Alabasterman"', *CM* 5 (1990), 39–56.
[37] Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, i. 21–2.
[38] R. Edwards, 'King Richard's Tomb at Leicester', *The Ricardian*, 3 (1975), 8–9.
[39] A. C. Fryer, *Wooden Monumental Effigies in England and Wales* (London, 1924), 13. Also note the late 13th-cent. wooden tomb chest of William Longespée, earl of Salisbury, in Salisbury Cathedral (Fig. 20).

effigies were drawn from the ranks of the well-to-do. Although a few patrons of lesser rank were honoured with such effigies, the majority were senior clergy, aristocrats, or gentry.[40] Among the episcopate, Archbishop Pecham (d. 1292) was commemorated by a wooden effigy in Canterbury Cathedral and, among the laity, Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk (d. 1415), and Sir Robert Achard (d. 1353) and his wives at Wingfield (Suffolk) and Sparsholt (Berks.) respectively.[41] In all these cases, the effigy was accompanied by lavish stone surrounds. Wood lost much of its appeal to patrons when a new material offering possibilities of brightness—namely, alabaster—came into use in the mid-fourteenth century.

In their handling of the human figure, wooden effigies present a very similar aspect to those in freestone, suggesting that they were the work of stonemasons. A close similarity is to be observed between the wooden effigy of Robert, duke of Normandy (*c*.1260), at Gloucester and the freestone effigy of a knight of the Valence family (*c*.1285) at Dorchester (Oxon.).[42] Much can be learned about the carvers' sculpting methods from the conservation work carried out in the 1990s on the effigy of John, Lord Hastings (d. 1325) at Abergavenny Priory.[43] This figure is one of the most accomplished wooden effigies to have been produced in the early fourteenth century. Stylistically it belongs to a group of effigies which includes those of Edmund, earl of Lancaster, and Aymer de Valence in Westminster Abbey.[44] Almost certainly, it was produced in a metropolitan milieu by a craftsman who had either been involved at the Abbey or was familiar with the works there.

The carver of the effigy probably began his labours by placing the trunk of the felled tree flat on his workbench, cut to size and still in its 'green' state. To form a base for the effigy, he would have cut a tangential section by slicing the timber down the length of its grain, removing the bark and outer sapwood by means of a long-handled axe with a T-shaped head.

Before he could begin work on the detailed carving, the sculptor would have needed to hollow out the timber. This was essential because internal stresses had the effect of making the timber crack and split as it dried out—dangers which were particularly severe when the core of the heartwood was still present. First, the sculptor would have had to reduce the volume of material by roughly cutting the outline shape of the effigy; then he would have removed the core of the heartwood by hollowing out the bulk of the figure from behind.

Since the task of hollowing out the effigy required the application of considerable force, only the most basic surface carving was done before completion of this work. Typically, at this stage a long delay should have ensued before any further carving

[40] A civilian of squirearchical or franklin rank is commemorated by a wooden effigy of the mid-14th cent. at Much Marcle (Heref.).

[41] Fryer, *Wooden Monumental Effigies*, 88, 103, 70 respectively. At Sparsholt Sir Robert Achard appears to have been responsible for a very substantial rebuilding of the church.

[42] P. Lankester, 'A Military Effigy in Dorchester Abbey, Oxon.', *Oxoniensia*, 52 (1987), 145–72.

[43] P. Lindley, 'New Paradigms for the Aristocratic Funerary Monument around 1300: Reconstructing the Tomb of John, second Baron Hastings (1287–1325), at Abergavenny Priory, Monmouthshire', *CM* 21 (2006), appendix on technical examination by C. Galvin.

[44] The other effigies in the group are freestone.

was undertaken, for the wood had to dry out if cracks and splits were to be avoided later. But for some reason the sculptor of the Abergavenny effigy felt obliged to take a short cut. Unwisely he resorted to a process of accelerated drying, probably by placing the figure in a warm, dry atmosphere. This cutting of corners had a disastrous effect: extensive cracks and shakes quickly developed all over the effigy, which the sculptor sought to conceal by inserting splinter-like oak wedges. Equally disastrously, the whole figure warped along the diagonal, cupping inwards so that the figure no longer sat flat on the carver's bench. Axe marks on the base show where an attempt was made to correct the distortion. Why the sculptor should have resorted to these time-saving measures when executing such a high-status commission is not clear. It can hardly have been that he was unaware of the dangers of accelerated drying; the need to allow proper drying out was stressed in every manual on the subject. The most likely explanation is that he was under pressure to deliver the effigy quickly to the church. It is possible that the effigy was required in time for the marking of the first anniversary of the deceased's death.

Once the sculptor had corrected the effects of the distortion, he was ready to embark on the final stages of production. His main task was to complete the carving of the finer details of the effigy, a task for which he used a series of small chisels. Once this was done, he had to smooth down the surface, rubbing it with the medieval equivalent of sandpaper, the dried skin of the dogfish. By this stage, the sculptor's labours were almost complete, and the effigy ready for application of the layers of gesso and paint to the surface. Fortunately for the sculptor, the cracks would not have been visible beneath the thickly encrusted decoration. It is not altogether clear whether the decoration was applied in the workshop or after installation in Abergavenny priory church. The advantage of applying it on installation was that damage to the lavish surface in transit would be avoided. In any event, great care would have been taken to protect the effigy in transportation. Along the flat edges of the base is a series of small dowel holes. It is possible that these were used to secure a marginal epitaph (now lost). Another use, however, could well have been to secure the figure in a cradle on its long journey.

INCISED SLABS

Incised slabs—gravestones with the carving incised directly onto the surface—like brasses, the other type of flat monument, were produced in large number in the Middle Ages. They remained a popular form of commemoration down to the end of the sixteenth century. From *c.*1270 there was always one major production centre of high-status slabs—whether it was based in London or elsewhere—which served a wide area. At the same time, there were also smaller regionally based workshops which served more localized markets.

The most distinctive of early incised slabs were those carved from Purbeck marble. For much of the thirteenth century Purbeck incised slabs formed part of the output of the marblers of Corfe Castle (Dorset). From *c.*1270, however, when

the marblers began to establish a presence in London, they formed part of their output in the capital. In the period to the Black Death the London-based Purbeck marblers dominated the market in high-quality incised slabs in the populous south-east (Fig. 12).[45] The masters who produced these memorials probably also traded in a variety of other Purbeck marble products. As a sideline, a few at least engaged in the production of brasses. Adam the Marbler, alias Adam of Corfe, who supplied a wide variety of marble products, was almost certainly the head of the workshop which produced the superb Camoys-style brasses. Adam's will shows that he owned tenements in both Paternoster Row in London and at Corfe Castle

Figure 12. Barking (Essex): Martin, vicar of Barking (d. 1328)

[45] S. Badham and M. Norris, *Early Incised Slabs and Brasses from the London Marblers* (London, 1999).

(Dorset).[46] Later in the century, however, there was a loosening of ties between the London-based and the Corfe-based marblers. The Black Death seriously disrupted production in the marblers' workshops in London. In the 1350s there was a shrinkage in the range of products on offer because of the mortality, and in the early 1360s the production of incised slabs in the capital appears to have ceased altogether.

The disarray in the London-based Purbeck marble industry allowed the alabastermen in the Midlands to step up production of slabs to meet demand. Before the plague they had been only small-scale producers; but now they found themselves able to satisfy a much larger market. Production of slabs in the workshops of south Derbyshire and Staffordshire rose steadily over the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. By the 1510s the Midlands alabastermen had become the leading producers in England, supplying a market concentrated in the north Midland counties, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire, but extending some way beyond. No detailed research aiming to identify well-defined groupings of Midlands-produced slabs of pre-sixteenth-century date has yet been undertaken. However, it is not difficult to find slabs of this period which can be shown to be related to one another. The fine slab of John Wydeville at Grafton Regis (Northants), *c.*1415, for example, is almost certainly from the same hand as that of Thomas Lovell at Clevedon (Som.). In the next generation the slab of William Grevel (d. 1440) at Drayton (Oxon.) is probably the work of the same maker as that of Richard Spicer at Claverley (Salop).[47]

There is no evidence that any other workshop operated on a scale comparable with those of London or south Derbyshire. A few workshops, however, have been identified as supplying essentially local or regional markets. A late fourteenth-century workshop, perhaps based at Hereford, was responsible for a series of grey sandstone slabs with large parts of the design made of coloured inlays. With the exception of Sir Andrew Harley's memorial, *c.*1392, at Allensmore (Heref.) none of these slabs is in good condition. In the Fens a brass-engraving workshop, probably based at Boston, produced incised slabs to distinctive designs in alabaster and Ancaster stone in the early fifteenth century. Finally, in Yorkshire in the second quarter of the fifteenth century there was a workshop which produced a series of slabs including those at Eastrington and Harpham, probably using alabaster from Ledsham in the West Riding.[48]

A minority of incised slabs appear stylistically unique. Some of these may have been the products of small workshops whose main output may not have been monumental. Others, however, are probably the sole surviving examples of the output of workshops specializing in slabs whose other products have been lost.[49]

[46] J. Blair, 'English Monumental Brasses before 1350: Types, Patterns and Workshops', in Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, 168–9.

[47] Badham, 'Evidence for the Minor Funerary Monument Industry', 174.

[48] For these examples, see Badham, 'Evidence for the Minor Funerary Monument Industry', 176; Badham, 'The Fens 1 Series: An Early Fifteenth-Century Group of Monumental Brasses and Incised Slabs', *JBAA* 142 (1989), 46–62.

[49] An example is the effigial slab at East Coker (Som.), which is the only surviving Ham stone incised slab.

Incised slabs have suffered more damage and maltreatment than any other genre of medieval funerary sculpture. It is clear, none the less, that the output of such slabs in the Middle Ages was substantial. Production appears to have been dispersed across a wide range of centres. If a small number of the workshops were based in towns, probably the larger number were in the countryside, at or near the quarries which supplied their essential raw material.

BRASSES

It is possible to gain a clearer idea of the organization and working practices of brass engraving than of any other branch of the funerary sculpture industry. Not only has extensive archival research uncovered the names of many of the engravers of brasses; stylistic analysis of extant examples has identified workshop groupings which can be related to centres of production. Brass engraving is revealed as an essentially urban activity, highly centralized and employing a high degree of standardization in production.

Brasses were first produced in England around the 1270s. The craftsmen responsible for engraving the earliest examples were first and foremost makers of incised slabs. Brass engraving, indeed, grew out of the production of incised slabs. On the Continent it became common in the thirteenth century to insert inlays of brass or marble into the surface of slabs to introduce variety; typically, the head or hands of the figure might be represented in this way. From these innovations it was a relatively short step to using brass inlays for the whole figure or even the whole composition. Among the most popular types of early brass in England were tall cross brasses derived from incised or semi-relief prototypes. Big figure memorials, of the type now best represented by the early knights, were introduced no later than the 1280s.[50]

From the beginning, the workshops in London dominated the market, their products disseminated throughout England in urban and rural churches alike. For much of the time there were two, sometimes three, competing suppliers in the city, based either in St Paul's churchyard or the areas of Blackfriars and St Dunstan in the West, near Fleet St. In addition, there were numerous provincial workshops supplying more limited markets, among them in the pre-Black Death period the *ateliers* at York, Lincoln, Shrewsbury, Newcastle, Exeter, and probably a few other towns. Critical factors in the success of such workshops were the level of wealth locally, the availability of river transport networks, and distance from London, allowing carriage costs from the metropolis to be undercut. Most of the early regional workshops abandoned production in the wake of the Black Death, victims one by one of the crisis which afflicted the industry at that time. Only the workshop at York, distant enough from the capital, operated continuously from the late fourteenth century to the sixteenth, serving a market in Yorkshire and the north.

[50] Blair, 'English Monumental Brasses before 1350', 133–75.

Recent research on the early brasses and London-made incised slabs has highlighted the sheer scale of activity in the London workshops by 1300. The men who produced incised slabs and brasses were known as 'marblers', referring to their use of Purbeck marble. Around 1280 the occupational name 'marbler' figures frequently in London records with the appearance of John the marbler, Godfrey the marbler, and Walter the marbler.[51] At least two main series of brasses were being produced in London before 1300, these being known from their prototype examples as the 'Basyng' and the 'Ashford' series. The name of one Master Ralph has been tentatively associated with the second of these series.[52] The most successful of the early marblers, however, was Adam of Corfe, who had settled in London by 1305 and was dominant in the market until his death in *c.*1331. It was almost certainly Adam who produced the so-called 'Camoys' series of brasses which includes many of the early knights and priestly effigies such as that at Merton College (Fig. 13).

Figure 13. Merton College, Oxford: Richard de Hakebourne (d. 1322)

[51] Badham and Norris, *Early Incised Slabs and Brasses from the London Marblers*, 26.
[52] Ibid. 143, 150.

After Adam's death and the break-up of his business, another workshop came into being in London—the so-called 'Seymour' style, named after the brass of Laurence Seymour at Higham Ferrers—which flourished into the 1340s.[53]

The coming of the Black Death brought about a crisis in the London-based industry, with a severe contraction in output and a rise in foreign imports. That industry, however, although sorely weakened, was not completely extinguished. Production was maintained during the period of mortality in one of the big workshops—from this time known as London style 'A'—while, after the return of normal conditions, a second was established, known as style 'B'.[54] The hallmarks of 'A' 's work, represented by the Cassy brass at Deerhurst (Glos.) (Fig. 64), were some distinctive letter forms (including an oak leaf in capital letters) and a preference for showing noses in profile. 'B' 's work, as represented by Joan, Lady Cobham's brass at Cobham (Fig. 24), was characterized by extreme economy of line. Between them, this pair of workshops dominated the national market for brasses for several generations. Workshop 'B' was the longer-lived, flourishing until the early 1470s; 'A' survived until *c.*1409, when its place was taken by a successor, known as 'D'. 'D' produced the brasses of Dean William Prestwick at Warbleton (Sussex) and Richard Willoughby at Wollaton (Notts.) (Figs. 14, 16). 'D' 's trademark signature was an elaborate rose window in the pediment of its canopies.[55]

Thanks to a precious few documentary survivals, some of the heads of workshops can be identified by name.[56] We have already seen that the marbler Adam of Corfe was probably responsible for the pre-Black Death 'Camoys' series. After the Black Death there is evidence to connect Richard and Henry Lakenham, probably father and son, with the long-lived style 'B'. The Lakenhams' connection with 'B' can be inferred from their responsibility for Sir Nicholas Loveine's tomb of 1376, which has affinities with a number of tombs which carry 'B' brasses. Henry Lakenham was almost certainly succeeded on his death in 1387 by his apprentice William West, who is actually memorialized on a 'B' brass. This is the brass to William's parents at Sudborough (Northants) (*c.*1415), on which he is shown as a child and described as a marbler: there can be little doubt that he produced the memorial himself. On West's death or retirement—he died in 1453—his workshop was taken over by John Essex: one John Essex, marbler, was engaged to supply the brass epitaph round the tomb of Richard Beauchamp (Fig. 22) at Warwick, which is in a 'B' script. Essex was probably the last 'B' master, as after his death in 1465 the workshop went into rapid decline. It is not possible to trace in equivalent detail the succession of masters of the 'A' and 'D' workshops. However, John Ramsey III is likely to

[53] P. Binski, 'The Stylistic Sequence of London Figure Brasses', in Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, 69–132.

[54] S. Badham, 'Monumental Brasses and the Black Death—a Re-appraisal', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 130 (2000), 207–47.

[55] For stylistic analysis of London-made brasses, see J. P. C. Kent, 'Monumental Brasses: A New Classification of Military Effigies, *c.*1360–*c.*1485', *JBAA*, 3rd ser., 12 (1949), 70–97; M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials* (2 vols., London, 1977).

[56] For this paragraph, see R. Emmerson, 'Monumental Brasses: London Design, *c.*1420–1485', *JBAA* 131 (1978), 50–78; Blair, 'Henry Lakenham'.

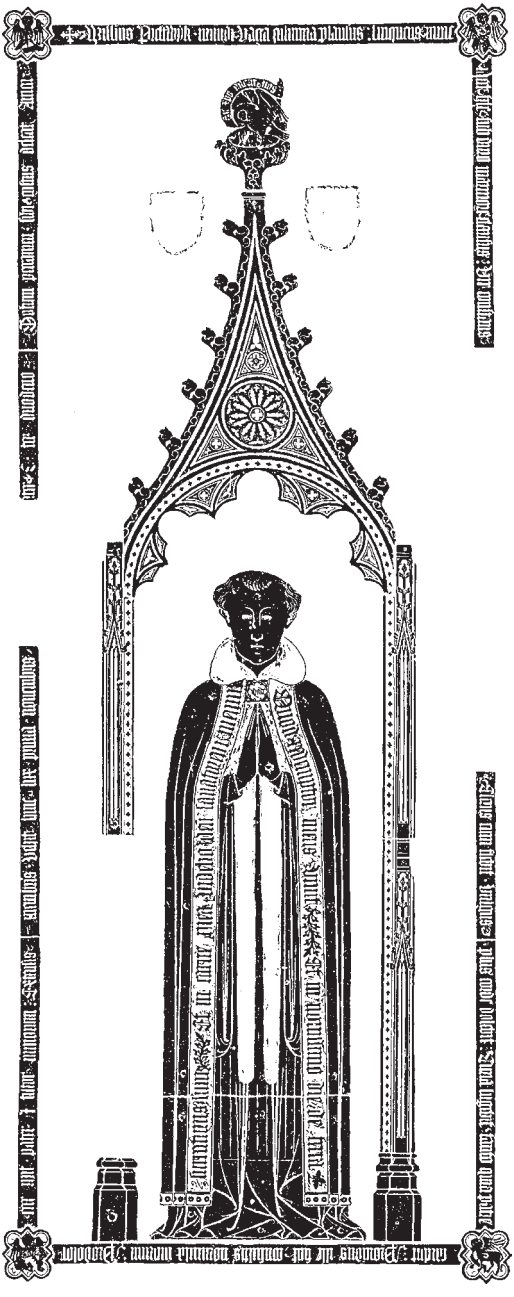

Figure 14. Warbleton (Sussex): William Prestwick (d. 1436). Rubbing of brass

have been the principal master at 'A', while James Reames is identifiable as the 'D' master on the evidence of the contract for Richard Willoughby's brass of 1466.[57] Style 'C', one of the shorter-lived London workshops, which operated between the 1380s and 1407, has been associated with the name of John Mapilton.[58]

The two main London workshops appear to have passed through a period of instability and upheaval in the third quarter of the fifteenth century. The main cause of their problems was a rise in demand, particularly from urban customers, for small, low-cost brasses, which led to a revival in the provincial workshops and weakening of the grip of the London producers. Centres of engraving were established at Norwich, Bury St Edmunds, Boston, Cambridge, Coventry, Durham, and probably Rochester.[59] These workshops had a more geographically limited market than the London suppliers, while yet accounting for a high proportion of the brasses laid in their respective hinterlands. In London both the 'B' and 'D' workshops went out of business, their places taken by two successor workshops known respectively as 'F' and 'G'. Both of these flourished until well into the reign of Henry VIII. Some of the craftsmen from the earlier workshops appear to have found employment in the new, assuring a measure of continuity in the crossover period. Unfortunately, the names of the heads of the new workshops are not known for certain, although John Lorimer, a documented marbler, was evidently associated with one of them.

The continuities of style observable in the work of the main workshops are indicative of establishments able to sustain themselves institutionally well beyond the lifetime of a single individual. Designs were regularly updated, to allow for changes in fashion or armour; yet idiosyncrasies like letter shapes or the depiction of noses attest underlying continuity. This evidence points to the existence of a team of craftsmen in a workshop operating under the direction of a controlling master. The pattern of continuity appears to have been maintained by a regime of training rather than through the employment of templates. What suggests this is the weakening of uniformity in those periods when the workshops were in disarray. Between 1465 and 1470, for example, when 'B' was collapsing, an odd mixture of patterns was found on the workshop's brasses. A variety of letter forms appear, and on one brass, at Lowick (Northants), the drapery of the female figure actually follows a 'D' design.[60] When the regime of training in the workshop began to disintegrate, the older craftsmen would continue much as before; the younger men, however, evidently sought models from elsewhere.

On current evidence it is not altogether clear what we are to understand by the term 'workshop' in this context. A workshop could have consisted of a firm

[57] N. E. Saul, *Death, Art, and Memory in Medieval England: The Cobham Family and their Monuments, 1300–1500* (Oxford, 2001), 112–13; idem, 'The Contract for the Brass of Richard Willoughby (d. 1471) at Wollaton (Notts.)', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 50 (2006), 166–93.

[58] S. Badham, 'The London C Workshop', *TMBS* 17 (2005), 223–50.

[59] S. Badham, 'London Standardisation and Provincial Idiosyncrasy: The Organisation and Working Practices of Brass-Engraving Workshops in pre-Reformation England', *CM* 5 (1990), 3–25; Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, ch. 13.

[60] Emmerson, 'Monumental Brasses: London Design', 60.

producing a range of brasses to a set of stock designs in a single set of premises; alternatively, it could describe a group of semi-independent craftsmen to whom work was subcontracted by a master; or, yet again, it could have been a combination of both. The close dependence of a workshop on the person of a controlling master is suggested by the experience of the short-lived workshops, such as London style 'C'. As soon as the head of the workshop died or retired, as John Mapilton, the apparent head of 'C', did in 1407, the workshop ceased production. In the larger workshops, however, the tie between master and craftsman may have been somewhat looser. Thus wide variations of craftsmanship and design are found in the work of style 'A' in the half-century or so of its existence. A number of 'A' 's products are outstanding—the figures of John de Swynstede (d. 1395) at Edlesborough (Bucks.) and Reginald, Lord Cobham (d. 1403), at Lingfield (Surrey) are examples—while others are poor. What today would be termed 'quality control' appears to have been weak; in 'B', by contrast, it appears to have been much stronger.

Uncertainty also surrounds the relationship of the workshops to the craftsmen working in related media. Some at least of those who made brasses were engaged in other lines of business. William Heyward, for example, who was a leading light in the Norwich workshops, is also known to have worked as a glazier. How far, if at all, such craftsmen combined different types of activity, beyond the sharing of designs, is not clear. One or two of the workshops apparently had ties with the world of the leading master masons. In the late fourteenth century style 'B' evidently enjoyed ties with the king's master mason, Henry Yevele. It is striking that a number of the tomb chests designed by Yevele are fitted with brass inscriptions identifiable as from the 'B' workshop. It was almost certainly 'B' 's close links with Yevele which enabled it to win so many lucrative commissions from high-status clients in these years. John, Lord Cobham, for example, who had commissioned brasses from 'A' in the 1360s, switched to 'B' at roughly the time that he was employing Yevele on his many building projects in London and Kent. Yet an oddity of the late fourteenth-century trade is that Yevele is known to have been involved in some capacity in brass engraving himself. In his will, in connection with arrangements relating to his lease of tenements in St Paul's Churchyard, a known centre of brass engraving, he spoke of 'all my marble and latten goods and my tools therein'.[61] A figure like Yevele, who in his later years was essentially an entrepreneur, is unlikely to have been involved in the engraving of brasses on a day-to-day basis. Yet his evident connections with 'B' do point to some association with the firm. Did he supply designs from which the engravers worked? Or had he actually been involved with Lakenham in his earlier years?

The organization of the engraving of brasses is thus less well understood in its finer details than it is in broad outline. What the actual reality was behind the term 'workshop' is more obscure than the convenient equation of workshop with style might suggest. Even in its looser forms of organization, however, brass engraving

[61] Harvey, *English Medieval Architects*, 365.

was more highly centralized than the production of sculpted effigies and stone slabs. The reason for this is that it was difficult to locate brass engraving near to the raw materials of the trade.[62] Latten—the raw sheets of brass—had to be imported from the Continent, while the Purbeck slabs had to be brought from Dorset. Availability of water transport and the existence of a ready market in London were probably the main factors which encouraged urban location.

CONCLUSION

The production of funerary sculpture was one of the most widely disseminated lesser industries in medieval England. In the past, this industry has been seen as predominantly urban-based. However, once the special case of brasses is set aside, the evidence of urban tomb-making is remarkably thin. Tomb manufacture, in reality, seems to have been more a rural- than an urban-based activity. Typically, tomb makers established their workshops at or near quarries, where they had easy access to their raw material, and from which they could organize distribution; in many parts of England, notably the north-west and south, there is evidence that they also travelled around to execute commissions. Only in the fifteenth century is there evidence, in the case of the alabaster trade, of a shift to a more urban-based industry.

If tomb-making was thus widely distributed and decentralized, there is nothing to suggest that clients and producers had any difficulty establishing contact with one another. In the highly developed business network which comprised the market of medieval England there were plenty of opportunities for potential buyers to do business with sellers. It is the working of the market in funerary sculpture, a subject as well documented as the organization of production is not, to which we turn next.

[62] I am grateful to Sally Badham for this suggestion.

5

Choosing a Monument

THE AESTHETICS OF CHOICE

In 1608, as his earthly days were drawing to a close, Sir William Paston's thoughts turned to commissioning a monument for himself to go in North Walsham church. As he had done so often in the past, he looked for advice to his friend, Sir Thomas Knyvett of Ashwellthorpe, whose daughter his grandson had married. The two agreed that Knyvett would act on Paston's behalf in placing a contract for a tomb with two London sculptors, William Wright and John Key, both experienced tomb-makers. The contract, still extant, gives the specifications for the monument: the design was to be executed according to a sketch 'drawen under the hand of Sir Thomas Knevet', the central feature being a 'picture of a man in Armor restinge upon his Arme', above and around which were to be three pyramids of 'faire blacke marble stone' with 'Epitates, Writtings and Armes'. The cost of the monument was to be £200. Paston was to meet the expense of carrying it to Norfolk, but the masons themselves were to pay for their 'meate, drinke, bricke and mortar' while it was being erected.[1] The seal was set on these terms on 23 February 1608. Wright and Key appear to have made good progress with the work, and on 26 May Paston sent the first instalment of the £200 due. The monument was virtually complete by the appointed date, 2 October—which was perhaps Paston's birthday. Just one task remained: the epitaph had to be inscribed in the space prepared for it. On 14 October Paston once again sought the advice of Knyvett. 'I have thought yt good', he wrote, 'to send you enclosed . . . the Epitaphe made for my Tombe, the which I have good liking of; and therefore if you be of that minde I will have it ingraven upon the stone out of hand, desiring you to return me the same by my messenger if it be to your good liking . . . '. A form of words was agreed; and eventually the epitaph, extolling the commemorated's piety and generosity, was inscribed above his effigy. By this time Sir William Paston was aged about eighty. Not long afterwards, on 20 October 1610, he was laid to rest under the tomb to whose conception he had devoted such care.

A body of correspondence from a few years earlier, from another archive, sheds further light on the business of commissioning a monument.[2] In the

[1] Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Top Norfolk b.3, fos. 24^{v}–25, discussed by R. W. Ketton-Cremer, *Forty Norfolk Essays* (Norwich, 1961), 11–13.

[2] *Sussex Notes and Queries*, 2 (1929), 175–7.

1590s the wealthy Sussex landowner, John Gage of Firle, was involved in the commissioning of brasses for himself and his two wives from the engraver Gerard Johnson of Southwark. Gage proved a demanding client. Johnson had originally suggested that Gage's wives be shown in the new fashion of farthingales; he had sent his client a sketch of his proposed design for the brass showing them so attired. Gage rejected the suggestions and scribbled critical comments all over the sketch; he insisted that the farthingales be changed to straight skirts. He also gave instructions that the ladies' hats be changed, and an actual hat was sent to Southwark to be modelled. The finished brass, which still survives in Firle church, shows that Gage got his way on all the matters which he disputed with Johnson.

For monuments of the pre-Reformation period there is rarely if ever such illuminating correspondence as there is for these two cases. A dozen or so tomb contracts have survived from the period down to about 1520. None of these, however, is accompanied by any related correspondence. The study of the commissioning of monuments in the medieval period has necessarily to be undertaken in more general terms. It would be wrong, however, to overlook the potential value of a different body of documentation, the great mass of testamentary evidence which has come down to us. If this body of material is subjected to scrutiny and analysis alongside the evidence of the monuments themselves, it can be seen when and by whom contracts were placed, how contact was established between client and workshop, how long it took for a monument to be made, and what sort of prices were paid. It may be the case, at the end, that the workings of the funerary sculpture market in the Middle Ages are found to have been not so very different from those in the post-Reformation period.

On one matter, however, the sources for the Middle Ages are remarkably uninformative. This is the matter of contemporary aesthetic sensibility. What aesthetic sense, if any, did contemporaries bring to the viewing and commissioning of monuments? What artistic considerations entered into their judgements? It is difficult to give even the most rudimentary of answers to these questions. Our principal sources—the wills and contracts—are by their very nature legal or business documents; they tell us little or nothing about matters of taste. Contracts confine themselves to such details as the measurements of the tomb, the attire of the commemorated, and the blazons to be shown, while in most wills the specifications given are usually very brief. Not even the request, sometimes made, that the monument be based on another known to the testator affords much insight. What is evidenced here is simply the standard medieval preference for authority over originality. In neither wills nor contracts is much insight afforded into the role of taste in the commissioning of monuments.

There are just a couple of texts which afford some indication of how contemporaries might have responded aesthetically to monuments, both of them associated with monasteries. The first is John Flete's *History of Westminster Abbey*, and the

other an account of the monuments at St Albans Abbey written in *c*.1428.[3] Flete's is the more sparing of the two in comment. The author's interest in monuments is largely incidental to his account of the lives of the abbey's superiors. He commonly reproduces epitaphs, to that extent showing a strong textual interest. For the most part, however, his comments are confined to noting the existence of a monument and identifying the material it is made of. Thus he says that this or that abbot was commemorated by a 'small marble slab' or a 'small black marble slab'; on one occasion he notes an alabaster monument, and on another a brass.[4] He ventures no comment on the beauty or distinction of the monuments he describes.

Altogether fuller is the St Albans account by an anonymous monk of the house. The St Albans writer is moved by an intense pride in his community's tradition of burial and commemoration. He opens with a description of the main shrines in the abbey, principally those of St Alban himself behind the high altar and St Amphibalus in the Lady Chapel; throughout the description he places a strong emphasis on the high quality of the workmanship in the shrines. Next he gives a list of the tombs in the choir and presbytery, all of them tombs of abbots of the previous two centuries—Hugh Eversdon, Richard Wallingford, Michael Mentmore, and Thomas de la Mare nearest to the altar step, and John Marynes, John Berkhamsted, and Roger Norton further west. After this, the monuments and burials in the chapter house and cloister are listed, the majority of them burials of early abbots, in some cases with unmarked graves. The author then embarks on a description of the monuments in the choir aisles and eastern chapels, among them the tombs of William Clinton, earl of Huntingdon, and other senior laity associated with the house. Finally, he reviews the monuments in the nave and transepts, some of them monuments of monks and obedientiaries, the great majority, however, commemorating lay officials, corrodians, and local gentry who were benefactors of the house.

The writer's main concern is with the fame of the commemorated. He treats a tomb monument as a mnemonic trigger to celebration of the commemorated's offices and benefactions. Where a person had made a gift recorded in the abbey's Book of Benefactors, he mentions the fact. He is not entirely insensitive, however, to the appearance or character of what he sees. He discriminates carefully between the principal types of stone employed in the tombs. He makes frequent use of

[3] J. Flete, *History of Westminster Abbey*, ed. J. Armitage Robinson (Cambridge, 1909); BL, Harley MS 3775, published in *Annales Monasterii Sancti Albani a Johanne Amundesham Monacho*, i, ed. H. T. Riley (Rolls Series, 28, 1870), 432–9; for a translation, see R. Lloyd, *An Account of the Altars, Monuments and Tombs existing A.D. 1428 in St Albans Abbey* (St Albans, 1873). There is one other contemporary description of a monument of significance—the description of the Hastings brass at Elsing in the record of the *Grey* v. *Hastings* case in the Court of Chivalry, printed by A. R. Wagner, 'A Fifteenth-Century Description of the Brass of Sir Hugh Hastings at Elsing, Norfolk', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 19 (1939), 421–8. The description, however, is concerned mainly with heraldry, and offers little aesthetic appreciation—which reinforces the point being made here.

[4] 'Sub parvo lapide marmoreo'; 'sub parvo lapide marmoreo nigro' (Flete, *History of Westminster Abbey*, 85, 91); the latter was presumably a slab of Tournai marble. The alabaster tomb was Langham's, which is extant, and the brass Richard Sudbury's, which is lost: 'cum imagine . . . in metallo aereo' (ibid. 132, 122).

the term 'marble stone' ('lapidem marmoream') to describe a slab of Purbeck marble or Tournai marble. When he describes a tomb or effigy of alabaster, he uses the term 'white stone' ('albo lapide'). When referring to any other type of memorial, for example a freestone effigy, he says 'hard stone' ('duro lapide'). It is not uncommon for him to describe the principal features of a monument. He tells us that Sir Walter Sottingham's slab was decorated with a shield of arms and a marginal inscription, while the earl of Huntingdon's effigy was painted 'beautifully and sumptuously'. In some cases he notes whether the monument bore an effigy or not. He records that William Alnwick's slab in the ambulatory had an 'image' (effigy) and verses, while Sir Thomas Hoo's in the nave aisle was decorated with the figure of a knight. Almost without exception he records whether a monument had an inscription or not. In those instances—the majority—where an inscription was present, he comments on its literary qualities and on the characteristics of the commemorated it evoked. The author's careful recording of inscriptions points to an interest in the monuments which was primarily text-based: hence the frequent connections which he makes with the Book of Benefactors. Yet there is some evidence of a broader aesthetic appreciation. The author shows himself sensitive to colour—to the colour of stone and to the coloured decoration of stone effigies. He shows too a sensitivity to design and to quality of workmanship. In one singular respect, however, his aesthetic appreciation seems lacking. He was totally unmoved by the intrinsic beauty of a memorial; he could not conceive of it, in the modern sense, as a work of art. Before the high altar lay two of the most magnificent Flemish brasses in England. These were the brasses commissioned by Abbot Thomas de la Mare for himself and his immediate predecessor Michael Mentmore. Near the beginning of his account, the writer refers to the two rows of slabs commemorating abbots before the high altar. Yet the fact that the slabs of de la Mare and Mentmore were altogether different in character from the others passed him by. Their size, their artistic excellence, and the rich decoration of their surfaces left him unmoved. His aesthetic sense was largely functional. How he responded to a monument depended entirely on his reaction to its didactic and informative purpose.

In this respect the anonymous writer did not stand alone. Fifty years earlier Thomas Walsingham, the monk chronicler of St Albans, had written his own brief description of the de la Mare and Mentmore brasses in the Book of Benefactors.[5] He described the marble slabs as 'almost entirely covered with brass plates, on which their images appear in beautiful workmanship of the finest quality' ('qui fere totaliter operiuntur laminis de auricalco in quibus ymagines fiunt opre subtilissimo ac decoro'). The adjectives which Walsingham employed were ones commonly used to describe fine artwork. The choice of 'decorus' ('beautiful') was triggered by Psalm 25, verse 8, 'Domine dilexi decorem domus tue' ('I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of thy house'), while 'subtilis' was an epithet often used in connection with precious metalwork, usually to convey inimitability. Walsingham's description

[5] BL, Cotton MS Nero D VII, fo. 23r. For discussion, see N. Rogers, 'The Earliest Known Description of the de la Mare Brass at St Albans Abbey', *TMBS* 14 (1987), 154–7.

was mainly concerned to emphasize the fine craftsmanship of the memorials. His aesthetic appreciation was purely conventional.

If there is a reason for the limited intellectual response to monuments in the Middle Ages, it is to be found in the contemporary absence of a vocabulary of critical judgement. By the standards of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italy the language of aesthetic appreciation in England was relatively undeveloped. Objects were looked at essentially through the prism of the writings of the schoolmen. According to this understanding, the principal requirement of a work was that it should be pleasing to the eye. Visual sensibility was judged according to three main criteria: the work should be skilfully crafted or drawn; it should be brightly coloured or adorned; and it should exhibit due proportion of harmony, both in its geometry and in the relation of the parts to the whole.[6]

An aesthetic response to a monument in practice, therefore, turned on some or all of the following considerations: the quality of its execution; whether its proportions were satisfying; the richness of its marble or resin inlays; and the brightness or brilliance of its gilding. There is evidence to show that all four considerations played a part in the thinking of those who commissioned monuments.

An interest in the potential of bright inlays to enhance the appearance of a monument is well attested from the mid-thirteenth century. By no later than the 1260s, certainly, it had become a speciality of Low Countries marblers to inlay black marble slabs with materials in contrasting colours. On a Tournai slab in Noyon Cathedral of *c*.1320 the main part of the composition is incised, while the face and the hands are inlaid in a white stone, and parts of the canopy and a book are in brass. In England, brass inlays were incorporated on many of the slabs produced by the London-based Purbeck marblers. On the slab to John de la More (d. 1309) at Westwell (Kent) the middle and lower parts of the figure are incised, while the upper part of the figure, canopy, and inscription are all inlaid in brass (these now lost). Sometimes features in relief were introduced to add variety. On a tomb at St Briavels (Glos.) a female head in bold relief is inserted at the top of a cross slab otherwise in low relief. Some of the most visually stunning effects were produced by inlaying slabs with applied mosaic. At Westminster Abbey, Margaret and John, the children of William de Valence, are each commemorated by slabs adorned with an applied layer of Cosmati work in red, white, and gold with a cross, shields, and inscription in brass. The slabs to the Valences were too exotic to attract much native imitation. However, inlays of other sorts were widely used on incised slabs. On a series of Herefordshire slabs inlays of a white substance were used to represent figures and canopies—parts of the composition which on more conventional memorials might be represented in brass.[7] On high-status effigies and brasses parts of the surface were sometimes cut away to receive jewels, fictive jewels, or coloured composition. This was the case on the Purbeck marble effigy of King John in Worcester Cathedral and Edmund, earl of Lancaster's effigy and canopy in Westminster Abbey.

[6] M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft* (London, 1978), 79.

[7] For this paragraph, see S. Badham, '"A new feire peynted stone": Medieval English Incised Slabs?', *CM* 19 (2004), 20–52.

Closely related to the taste for contrasting inlays was the contemporary keenness for bright colour. The enthusiasm which medieval patrons felt for colour is most clearly illustrated in England by the letters of King Henry III. In a stream of instructions which he sent to officials engaged on his building projects, Henry regularly urged the richest and brightest effects possible. In Henry's eyes, light was identified with the light of God: a brightly lit interior would afford insight into the kingdom to come. In 1233 the king ordered that in the hall of Winchester palace the capitals and bosses should be gilded and the surrounding walls painted white. At Westminster Abbey in the 1260s he said that the Confessor's shrine was to be brightly lit by a combination of rich paintwork and the light from a corona of candles.[8] Henry's striving for lightness was inseparable from his longing for splendour. Consulted on the materials to be used in construction of a pair of leopards by his throne, he said that, if greater splendour could be achieved by use of bronze rather than marble, then bronze should be used.[9] Henry considered bronze more splendid because, being a metal, it would reflect light. Henry's reaction to light was rather like Abbot Suger's on beholding the light reflected from the jewelled reliquary at St-Denis. For both men, light had a visionary quality. It inspired both pleasure and joy.

A fascination with the qualities of light was a factor influencing taste in funerary sculpture. It explains the requests which testators sometimes made for the gilding of their memorials. In 1438 Maud, Lady Mauley, asked for a memorial of copper or gilded brass, while in 1431 Ralph, Lord Cromwell, in his first will, requested that his brass of copper alloy be gilded.[10] A delight in bright metals very likely contributed to the popularity of heraldic attire on brasses from the late fourteenth century. Brasses as rich in heraldry as those of William Finderne and his wife at Childrey (Berks.) (Fig. 15) and Sir John and Lady Harsick at Southacre (Norfolk) (Fig. 71) must have presented magnificent sights in their heyday. The smaller brasses of Nicholas and Margaret Gaynesford at Carshalton (Surrey) and Thomas and Anne Heveningham at Ketteringham (Norfolk), both enamelled and gilded, today present spectacles of quite exceptional richness. When these memorials were viewed in light filtered through the silvery-white stained glass of the period, they must have sparkled and shone like jewellery.

The appetite for brightness, however, involved much more than a delight in heraldry and gilding. It was the spur to the extensive use of polychromy on monuments. The importance of such decoration was often stressed in contracts. Katherine Green's contract of 1419 for her husband's tomb at Lowick (Northants) specified that it was to be 'gilded, painted and arrayed with colours'.[11] Richard Hertcombe's contract of the same year for an earl of Salisbury's

[8] P. Brieger, *English Art 1216–1307* (Oxford, 1957), 121, 130.

[9] *Close Rolls 1242–7*, 293.

[10] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii, ed. J. Raine (Surtees Soc. 30, 1855), 66; Magdalen College, Oxford, Miscellaneous 359. I owe this last reference to Sally Badham. The specifications for John Ormond's now much mutilated brass at Alfreton (Derby.), 1503, provided for it to be gilded: TNA: PRO, SP46/181/5.

[11] F. H. Crossley, *English Church Monuments A.D. 1150–1550* (London, 1921), 30.

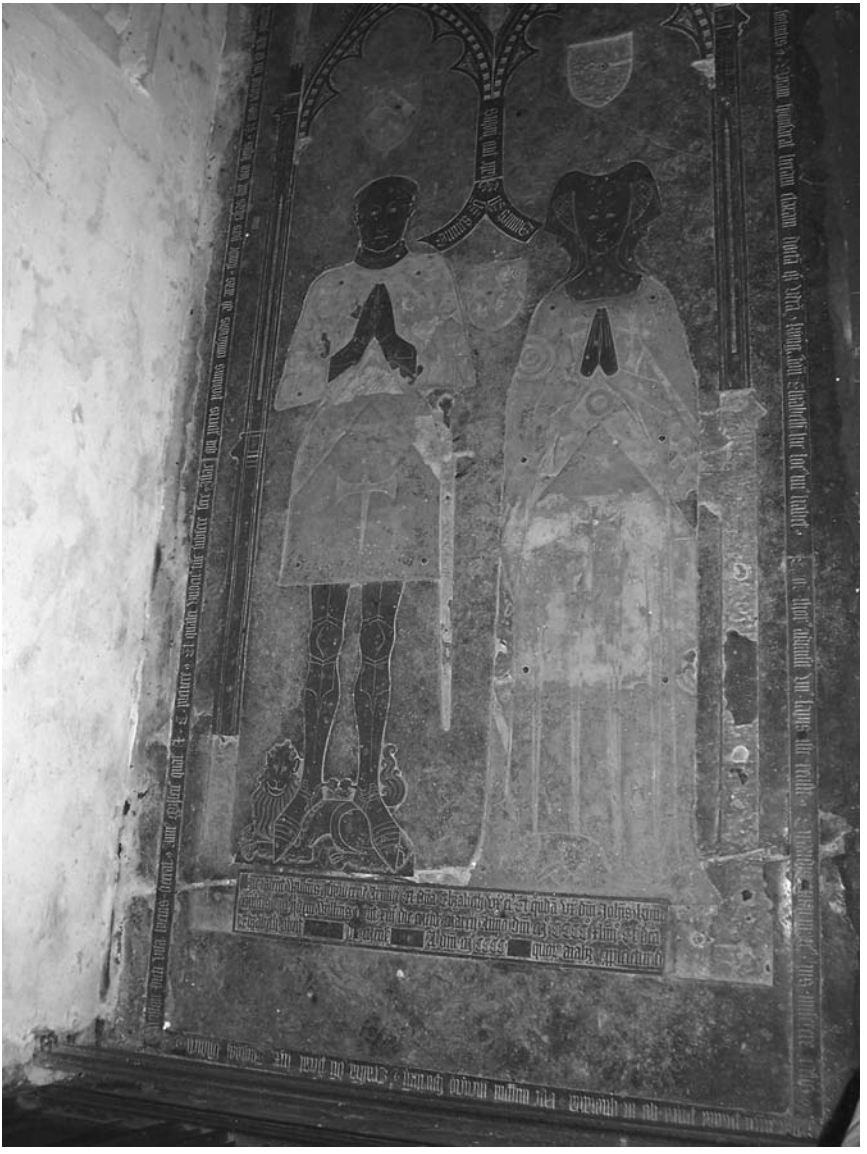

Figure 15. Childrey (Berks.): William Finderne (d. 1445) and his wife

tomb required that the figures be 'painted, gilded and arrayed well and decently in their colours as pertains to such images'.[12] Polychromy was used extensively on all major high-status monuments: effigies, chests, architectural surrounds, and weepers would probably all have been painted. The late fourteenth-century tomb of Sir Roger de Boys and his wife at Ingham (Norfolk) still retains much of its once elaborate display of painted and gesso decoration, to which metal leaf was added. A recent analysis of the extant polychromy on the tomb of Aveline, countess of Lancaster, *c.*1290, in Westminster Abbey has revealed how extensive the decoration on this tomb once was.[13] Prolific use was made of gold leaf and of translucent glazes over reflective white and metallic surfaces. Aveline's surcoat was coloured a deep green, and her overmantle red, with the details picked out in gold. On the pillows beneath her head, heraldic emblems were painted in imitation of woven silk fabric. On either side of the canopy roof a series of repeated heraldic motifs was painted in glazes over gold. Many areas of the extensive sculptural relief were treated with gilt metal decoration. The sight of Aveline's tomb and of her husband's, Earl Edmund's, even richer tomb adjacent must have been mesmerizing when viewed in candlelight.

Remains of polychromy are to be seen on a number of big late medieval and Tudor tombs, notably those of Sir Henry Vernon at Tong and William, earl of Arundel, at Arundel. There is also evidence that polychromy was used to enliven incised slabs. On a fragment of a slab of 1604 at St Botolph's Aldgate, London, yellow surface pigment has been found on the clothing of the figure, with black infilling used to highlight the lines.[14] On alabaster monuments polychromy was used principally to pick out the details of the effigy or canopy, as on Sir Reginald Cobham's monument at Lingfield (1446). Alabaster, a creamy white, was a material valued for brightness in its own right. Wooden effigies were likewise treated with paint. Polychromy, whether used sparingly or in quantity, was an essential ingredient in the creation of that brightness which contemporaries considered a key attribute of a good monument.[15]

Another quality which contemporaries looked for was honesty of workmanship. In the medieval period aesthetic appeal was closely related to perceptions of mechanical integrity. What people esteemed was inseparable from their sense of what was 'decent', 'honest', or 'competent'. The interrelatedness of these qualities is evident from the descriptive vocabulary used in contracts. In 1419 Lady Green required that her husband's tomb at Lowick be 'honestly and profitably' carved, while Richard Hertcombe, acting for an earl of Salisbury, asked for alabaster effigies 'well, decently and usefully' made.[16] A century later the executors of Lady

[12] Bayliss, 'An Indenture for Two Alabaster Effigies', *CM* 16 (2001), 24.

[13] S. Houlbrooke, 'A Study of the Materials and Techniques of the 13th Century Tomb of Aveline, Countess of Lancaster, in Westminster Abbey', *The Conservator*, 29 (2005/6), 105–17.

[14] Badham, ' "A new feire peynted stone" ', 27.

[15] The liking for polychromy was probably a factor in the decline of Purbeck marble in the 14th cent. Purbeck provided an effective colour contrast with freestone, but was dark by itself. From 16th-cent. evidence it seems that the polychrome work was carried out on-site at a church.

[16] Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 30; Bayliss, 'An Indenture', 24.

Margaret Beaufort asked for an effigy of copper executed 'wele, clenly, sufficiently and werkmanly'.[17] In *c.*1449 John Paston wrote to a correspondent stressing that a brass should be 'klenly wrowght'.[18] This selection of adjectives was often employed by testators when they made their wills. In 1424 John Stokes asked for a 'competent and honest' stone to be placed to his memory in St Margaret's, Southwark, while forty years later Margaret Bedingfield asked for an 'honest and decent' stone to be laid for her brother in the Austin Friars in London.[19] 'Decent' and 'honest' had featured among the adjectives employed by Henry III in the thirteenth century, and by the popes and their staff in correspondence long before that. The two adjectives and others like them became a constant refrain in late medieval wills. In 1454 Ralph Blaklow asked for an 'honest marble stone' to be placed to his memory in St Botolph's Aldgate, London, while twenty years later Nicholas Strelley used the same words in respect of a memorial at Strelley (Notts.).[20]

What did descriptive adjectives like 'honest' and 'decent' mean exactly? The general sense appears to have been 'fittingly', 'properly', or 'honourably'.[21] In literary texts 'honest' was usually associated with an emphasis on dignity. In wills the term is coupled with the phrase 'according to my estate'. In 1449 Sir John Neville asked to be commemorated at Haltemprice (Yorks.) 'honestly as it is acordyng for myn estate', while in 1475 Thomas Tyrell asked for a tomb for himself and his wife 'honestle for oure degree'.[22] In contexts where the coupling of 'honestly' and 'degree' was made, the meaning of 'honest' or 'honestly' is clear: it refers to the accurate representation of status. Other widely used qualifying adjectives or adverbs conveyed the same sense. In 1540 the Hull merchant Thomas Thomson asked for a brass of himself and his two wives 'with (his) marchaunt marke set upon it after the best manner'.[23] A merchant's mark for a trader was a signifier of status much as a coat of arms was for a gentleman.

In a few cases it is possible to relate the instructions in wills and contracts to the evidence of the surviving monument itself. At Lowick (Northants) the tomb commissioned by Katherine Green for her husband Ralph illustrates what a tomb made 'honestly and profitably' would have looked like (Fig. 11). The tomb is a finely executed work in Derbyshire alabaster in which the deceased's status is attested by a full-length effigy in armour and a lavish display of heraldry, including the blazoning of the Green arms on the breastplate; this last conceit would probably have made the tomb particularly 'honest'. On Richard Willoughby's brass of half a century later at Wollaton (Notts.) we can see what was meant when a patron asked, as Willoughby did, for figures in the 'godelyest wyse'. Robert's figure was

[17] Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 32.

[18] *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. N. Davis (Oxford, 1971, 1976), i, no. 37.

[19] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 302; BL, MS Harley 10, fo. 115^{r}.

[20] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/4, fo. 1^{r}; C. Kerry, 'Notes to the Pedigree of the Strelleys of Strelley, Oakerthorpe and Hazlebach', *Jnl. of the Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Soc.* 14 (1892), 93.

[21] *Middle English Dictionary*, ed. S. M. Kuhn and J. Reidy (Ann Arbor, Mich. 1956–88), iv. 911–12.

[22] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii. 147; TNA: PRO, PROB 11/6, fo. 237^{r}.

[23] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vi, ed. J. W. Clay (Surtees Soc., 106, 1902), 97–8.

Figure 16. Wollaton (Notts.): Richard Willoughby and his wife, *c*.1466

represented in a suit of spiky Milanese armour (what he referred to as 'the best harnes'), while his wife's was in fashionable attire with a lap dog with bells at the foot—exactly as laid down in the contract (Fig. 16).

In the case of a monument to a priest it is less easy to identify what was required than it is for a layman, as the testamentary instructions were usually less specific. There can be little doubt that for priests the representation of status was just as important as it was for laymen. On many early grave slabs to priests, as on many provincial brasses later, the commemorated's status was indicated by the representation of a chalice. When a tomb effigy or figure brass was required, then the language of 'fitting' and 'decent' was again used. In 1405 William Noion's request for a 'decent marble stone' in his memory at Haddenham (Cambs.) was interpreted by his executors to mean an elaborate brass showing him in a cope under a double canopy.[24] In the eyes of senior clergy, notions of 'honesty' and 'decency' were related to considerations of honour. In 1348, when he was asked to commission a monument to Archbishop Stratford, Prior Hathbrand of Canterbury wrote to the archbishop's brother saying that he did not know anyone skilled enough to undertake the commission and he feared that

[24] London, Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Arundel, i, fo. 224^{r}; W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire* (London, 1995), 143, 144.

an unworthy product would be injurious to the cathedral's honour; accordingly, he wondered if his correspondent could suggest an appropriate mason.[25] In the case of a senior clerk, the sense of high standing which a layman might feel thus translated itself into a sense of the honour of the cathedral or church to which he belonged.[26]

Is it possible to identify any more specific features or attributes which patrons looked for when choosing a tomb or brass? Are there any hallmarks identifiable with the descriptive adjectives 'honest and decent'? On the evidence of wills and contracts, it seems clear that three things in particular were sought—first, the proper representation of status; second, an inscription recording the name and date of death of the commemorated; and, thirdly, in somewhat fewer cases, textual appeals for intercession or personal religious imagery.

It is marks of status which were most commonly insisted on by testators. In almost every will in which provision was made for a monument the testator asked to be represented 'according to his estate'. Thus in 1461 the earl of Shrewsbury asked to be shown on his tomb 'according to my status', and in 1528 Sir Richard Knightley on his 'according to my degree'.[27] On medieval monuments 'degree' or 'estate' was most obviously represented through attire—armour for knights, mass vestments or copes for priests, and civilian attire for members of the third estate. Assumptions about 'degree' infiltrated even the language of the late medieval funerary sculpture trade. In 1376, when the contract for Sir Nicholas Loveine's tomb in St Mary Graces was placed by his executors, the word 'chivalrot' was used to denote a knightly effigy; no other descriptive terminology was needed.[28] The word, with its close affinities with knighthood, conveyed all.

But messages about status were communicated in other ways than through attire. Equally important in this connection—more precise, indeed, in its message—was heraldry. When testators went into any detail about their intended memorials, it was usually to prescribe the coats of arms to be shown. In 1429, in an otherwise brief will, Sir Richard Poynings asked for a shield on one side of his brass showing his father's arms impaling his mother's, and on the other a second with his own arms impaling his wife's.[29] Particularly lengthy were the instructions which Margaret Paston gave in her will of 1482. Status-conscious as always, Margaret prescribed the blazons to appear on no fewer than four shields: her husband's arms on one shield, her own arms and those of families to which she was related on the others.[30] In most cases, the blazons depicted were those of close kin: parents, spouses, or collaterals. However, in the fifteenth century the arms of livery companies were sometimes shown on the brasses of burgesses and merchants. The arms of the

[25] C. Wilson, 'The Medieval Monuments', in P. Collinson, N. Ramsay, M. Sparks (eds.), *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), 469. [26] On this point, see also below, 186.

[27] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii. 253; R. M. Serjeantson and H. I. Longden, 'The Parish Churches and Religious Houses of Northamptonshire: Their Dedications, Altars, Images and Lights', *Archaeological Jnl.* 70 (1913), 321.

[28] W. J. Blair, 'Henry Lakenham, Marbler of London, and a Tomb Contract of 1376', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 60 (1980), 66–74. [29] TNA: PROB 11/3, fo. 110^{v}.

[30] *Paston Letters and Papers*, i, no. 230. See also, below, 293.

Calais Staple appear on a number of woolmen's brasses, while on the tombs and brasses of leading crown servants the royal arms were included. In the heyday of 'bastard feudalism' in the fifteenth century magnates' badges and collars were often represented on the memorials of senior retainers.

After the trappings of status, it was the inscription in which patrons showed the most interest when commissioning a memorial. Testators often highlighted the inscription's importance in the instructions which they gave to their executors. In 1492 Isabel Wortley asked for a tomb to be placed to her memory at Thornhill (Yorks.) 'with an inscription around the stone', while in 1512 Sir John Huddleston requested burial at Hailes Abbey 'under a stone (with) writing to make mention of me and my departing'.[31] In most cases, testators were content to allow their executors settle the exact wording of the inscription with the tomb maker. In 1395, when commissioning a brass to his parents, Bishop Waltham of Salisbury said that it was to be 'inscribed according to the discretion of my executors'.[32] The more demanding—or, perhaps, the less trusting—testators, however, spelled out the exact wording. In 1496 John Pympe set out a lengthy genealogy of his family to go on his monument at Nettlestead (Kent), while a few years later Henry Mountford provided a moralizing homily for his brass at St Mary in Coslany, Norwich, where he was curate.[33] Instructions for epitaphs, relatively rare in fourteenth-century wills, become more common in those of the fifteenth and sixteenth as growing literacy made it possible for more people to read. Where the text of an epitaph was not prescribed in a will, it would probably have been agreed between the executor and the tomb-maker and set down in the contract. In the specifications she gave for a monument to herself and her husband at Alfreton (Derbyshire), John Ormond's widow prescribed a lengthy epitaph delineating her descent from Ralph, Lord Basset of Weldon.[34]

The last feature of the monument which testators sometimes singled out was religious imagery. By the late fifteenth century requests were commonly made for the inclusion of invocatory scrolls, symbols of the Evangelists, or figures of saints to whom the client felt particular devotion. The popularity of such motifs was a mark of how the design of memorials was shaped by individual taste. Some of the requests made by testators were remarkably specific. In 1472 Thomas Muschamp, a citizen and merchant of London, gave these instructions: 'I woll that I have a marble stone . . . with this scripture . . . Miseremini mei miseremini mei saltem vos amici mei quia manus domini tetigit me . . . And over the image for me a Rolle with this scriptur: Credo quod Redemptor meus vivit. And over the image of my wyf: Credo quod in novissimo die de terra surrectura sum. And vii Images of my vii sonnes to be apon the same stone with a Rolle commyng over their hedes havyng this scriptur: Credo quod in carne mea videbo deum salvatorem meum. And vii

[31] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii. 135 n.; W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire* (London, 2005), x.

[32] E. Kite, *The Monumental Brasses of Wiltshire* (London, 1860, repr. Bath, 1969), 97.

[33] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/11, fo. 21^{r-v}; F. Blomefield, *Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* (11 vols., London, 1805–10), iv. 487.

[34] TNA: PRO, SP46/181/5.

ymages of my vii doughters to be upon the same stone and a Rolle to be over their hedes of this scriptur: Credo videre bona domini in terra viventium . . . '.[35] Scarcely less detailed were the instructions which another London merchant, John Ansell, gave in 1516 for 'a pictour of the holy Lambe, with a little scriptour under his foote saying the holy Lambe, with a picture of the pellycane saying at his foote in a lytle scripture the goostly burde, saying in a scripture from the mannes heede the ii Johannis pray for the thirde'.[36] On monuments of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries votive scrolls and associated religious imagery formed a more regular part of the iconographic repertory. Like the inscriptions to which they were related, and which now often began with 'Orate pro anima', they were absorbed into the range of devices designed to secure intercession from the priest and passers-by.

THE BUSINESS OF CHOOSING

If, very broadly, these were the terms in which patrons thought about funerary commemoration, how did they exercise their choice in practice?

In wills patrons rarely went into much detail about the overall design of their monuments. They would not often say, for example, whether it was to be a tomb chest with effigies, a tomb chest alone, an incised slab, or a brass. Usually they spoke in fairly general terms. The request most commonly made was for a 'marble stone'—'lapidem marmoream' or 'petram marmoream'. 'Marble stone' is usually taken to mean a 'brass', because in midland and southern England brasses were usually laid in slabs of Purbeck marble. In most cases this is probably an acceptable translation. However, on at least some occasions it seems that the phrase could refer to an incised slab. In the north Midlands, where alabaster was easily to be had, far more incised slabs were laid than brasses. In 1394, when Mary, Lady Roos, left 100*s*. for a 'marble stone' to her memory in Rievaulx Abbey, it is likely that she intended an incised slab because a brass of appropriate size could hardly have been bought for this sum.[37] There were admittedly some cases in which testators went into some detail about the specifications for their memorials. Sometimes a testator or testatrix made a point of asking for a monument with figures ('ymages'). In 1475 an Essex gentleman Thomas Tyrell requested 'a stone' for his son William 'with his Ymage and the Ymage of Dame Alianore his first wife therupon to be made with their armes and scripture about them'.[38] A few high-ranking testators left instructions for tomb chests bearing effigies. In 1427 Thomas Montagu, earl of Salisbury, asked for a tomb chest four feet high for himself and his two wives at Bisham Abbey (Berks.) with effigies of all three commemorated.[39] It was not common for testators to specify the precise materials which were to be used in their monuments. In the Midlands and north, testators

[35] Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft*, 90. [36] Ibid. 90–1.
[37] J. Ward (ed.), *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry, 1066–1500* (Manchester, 1995), 223.
[38] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/6, fo. 237r. [39] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 397.

were more willing to provide this information because alabaster, a material popular for monuments, was available locally. In 1380 William, Lord Latimer, asked for an alabaster tomb in Guisborough Priory 'just as he had devised', while in 1440 Maud, countess of Cambridge, asked for a 'high tomb' of alabaster in Roche abbey (Yorks.).[40]

Although the testamentary evidence for commemoration is richer than often supposed, it should be stressed that in most wills little or nothing is said about the commissioning of monuments. Testators usually stated in which church they wanted to be buried; but how the burial place was to be marked and the people interred there identified were matters generally not mentioned. The explanation for the omission is that testators were usually happy to leave matters in the hands of their executors. In 1429, for example, Sir Gerard Braybrooke asked to be buried under a stone adorned 'with suche devys as thenketh to myn executours', while in 1493 Sir Edmund Mountford asked for 'a metely tombe made accordinge to . . . the discretion of myn executours'.[41] Arrangements such as these imply that testators were willing to place a high degree of trust in their executors. The wording of wills, indeed, sometimes indicates that they were given to discussing plans with them in advance. In 1440 the countess of Cambridge said that she was to be commemorated by an alabaster effigy 'in the manner to be explained to my executors'.[42] Where the instructions given by a testator can be set against the evidence of an extant monument, it is clear that the trust was not misplaced. In 1378 Sir John Foxley of Bray gave elaborate instructions for a brass composed of 'images' of himself and his two wives, his own figure displaying his arms, that of his first wife on the dexter side displaying his arms alongside her own, and that of his second wife displaying his arms again.[43] The brass, which survives in Bray church, shows that his instructions were carried out to the letter. In 1518 the London mercer Christopher Rawson gave equally precise instructions for a brass at All Hallows by the Tower, London, with a series of votive scrolls above the figures, the wording of which he prescribed.[44] His brass, still at All Hallows, shows that his orders too were carried out to the letter. Many other extant memorials afford evidence of fidelity to testamentary instructions. In 1527 William Cockayne of Hatley Cokayne (Beds.) asked for a brass showing his two wives and four daughters.[45] The brass, in Hatley church, has exactly the number of wives and children that he had prescribed. Forty years earlier Geoffrey Kidwelly had asked for a tomb with a brass portrait of himself, his coat of arms, and a scroll with the words 'Miserere mei Deus'.[46] The monument, at Little Wittenham (Berks.), takes precisely the form which he laid down (Fig. 61).

[40] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, i, ed. J. Raine (Surtees Soc. 4, 1836), 114; *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii. 120.

[41] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 409; *Some Oxfordshire Wills, 1393–1510*, ed. J. R. H. Weaver and A. Beardwood (Oxfordshire Record Soc., 1958), 48.

[42] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii. 120.

[43] A. Way, 'The Will of Sir John de Foxle, of Apuldrefield, Kent', *Archaeological Jnl.* 15 (1858), 267–77.

[44] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/19, fo. 101r.

[45] *Bedfordshire Wills, 1484–1533*, ed. P. Bell (Bedfordshire Historical Record Soc. 76, 1997), 52.

[46] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/7, fo. 68v.

Despite these indications of respect for testamentary instructions, however, there was an undercurrent of complaint about the dishonesty and unreliability of testators. In popular verse literature the untrustworthiness of executors became something of a topos. Denunciations of executors were sometimes included on inscriptions. There are a few well-known instances where executors can be shown to have been dilatory in attending to their obligations. Notoriously, it took John Paston ten years or more to provide a tombstone over his father's grave at Bromholm Priory (Norfolk).[47] In a handful of cases it can be shown that a monument as executed departed significantly from the instructions given in a will. In 1470 Sir Thomas Stathum of Morley (Derby.) had asked for a brass with kneeling figures of himself and his two wives and images of the Virgin Mary and St Christopher, while on the brass as set over his tomb the figures were shown full length and an extra saint was added (Fig. 17).[48] It would be wrong necessarily to conclude that every time changes were made to a testator's instructions it was the result of the executors' neglect or incompetence. Sometimes there may have been good reason for the making of changes. It is possible, for instance, that the executors found that they had less money to spend on the monument than anticipated. Equally, it might be the case that they found that the plans prescribed in a will needed adjustment in the light of circumstances; there might be a shortage of space in the church, for example, or the proposed design might be inappropriate for the intended position. On some occasions it is possible that the sculptor made suggestions for improvement which the executors found welcome. This may be the explanation for the changes in the design of Sir Thomas Stathum's brass: the inclusion of the extra saint actually made for a better balanced composition.

Although in general executors were conscientious in carrying out their obligations, there were undoubtedly risks involved in arranging post-obit commemoration. Any number of delays or practical difficulties might be encountered. For this reason not a few testators decided to make arrangements for their memorials in their lifetime. This is a factor which helps to explain the relative lack of detail about monuments in wills. In some cases testators refer to a monument already commissioned in their wills. In 1470, for example, Richard Willoughby asked to be buried in the 'new monument', which he had already built on the north side of Wollaton church, while twenty years earlier Helen Gilson had referred to a 'marbil stone' which she had 'ordeinede and arraied for my husband and me' in Guisborough Priory.[49] In 1501 John Smyth of Coventry made reference to an indenture for a monument, which had 'not yet been sealed'.[50] The kinds of person most likely to commission a memorial in their lifetime were those who lacked kin whom they could reliably trust. These included, among the laity,

[47] See below, 111–12. [48] Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft*, 90.

[49] Nottingham University Library, Mi 5/168/34; *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii. 149. Willoughby had commissioned his brass in 1466. A 16th-cent. testator wrote as if he had a monument prepared for use: *c*.1550, Sir Walter Hendley of Cranbrook (Kent) requested burial under a 'tombe of marble lyenge in the seller at Clerkenwell': L. L. Duncan, 'Notes on the Topography of Cranbrook Church', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 37 (1925), 25. The 'seller' could have been in a workshop or in his own house. [50] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/13, fo. 47^{v}.

Figure 17. Morley (Derby.): Sir Thomas Stathum (d. 1470) and his two wives. Rubbing of brass

single persons, widows, and those without issue, while virtually all of the clergy fell into the category. Among the latter, it was the bishops who took the greatest interest in their memorials. A well-known example is Archbishop Chichele's monument in Canterbury Cathedral. Chichele commissioned this highly personal tomb as an object of penitential devotion ten years into his archiepiscopate (*c.*1425). An elaborate 'double-decker' composition with a cadaver at the lower level, it was sited immediately opposite the archbishop's throne so that he could dwell on its message during services. Chichele was by no means alone in the keen interest which he took in the preparation of his memorial. Much earlier, Louis de Beaumont, bishop of Durham, had taken equal interest in the commissioning of his own. According to tradition, he had personally 'selected for his spirituall consolation' the numerous texts and inscriptions which it bore.[51] At St Albans, according to the *Gesta Abbatum*, Abbot Thomas de la Mare commissioned brasses both for himself and his predecessor Michael Mentmore.[52] At Winchester, Bishop Wykeham planned his elaborate chantry chapel as an integral part of the new nave, on which he embarked in about 1394. At a less exalted level, the Cambridge academic Walter Hewke commissioned his brass at Trinity Hall on his appointment to the Mastership of the College in 1512.[53] The practice of arranging lifetime commemoration, although particularly common among the clergy, was by no means confined to them. Lay founders of chantries or colleges sometimes followed the same course. John, Lord Cobham, for example, arranged for brasses to be laid to himself and his relatives in the 1360s after his foundation of Cobham college, while Richard Quartermain, a century later, commissioned a tomb to himself at Thame at the same time as founding a chantry there. In each case the intention was that the memorial would act as the focus of immediate priestly intercession.

There might be other circumstances in which monuments would be commissioned by those they commemorated. Typically, on the death of a spouse a bereaved husband or wife would commission a monument showing him or her with the deceased partner. After the mid-fourteenth century joint memorials became the commonest form of commemoration for married couples. In 1392, following his wife's death, Thomas, Lord Berkeley, commissioned magnificent brasses to them both at Wotton-under-Edge (Glos.). In 1409 Robert Hatfield of Owston (Yorks.) commissioned a joint brass on the death of his wife, showing the two of them holding hands and declaring on the epitaph that they had been 'right fully in love' (Fig. 60). In 1361 the widows of Lords Cobham and Berkeley, who were related through marriage, were jointly involved in the commissioning of monuments to their late husbands at Lingfield and Berkeley respectively (Fig. 52).[54]

The planning of a joint memorial by the surviving spouse necessarily entailed the latter in making provision for his or her interment when the time came. Sometimes indications are given in wills of the kinds of arrangements which testators made for

[51] Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, 60–2.

[52] *Gesta Abbatum Sancti Albani*, ed. H. T. Riley (3 vols., Rolls Series, 1867–9), iii. 389.

[53] C. G. R. Birch, 'Note on the Brass of Dr Walter Hewke, Trinity Hall,Cambridge', *TMBS* 2 (1892–6), 223–4.

[54] See below, 288–9.

this. If, as commonly the case, a memorial stone was already in place, then the task was fairly straightforward: the stone would be lifted, the new interment made, and the stone then replaced. In 1531 Cecily Nark left the sum of 5*s*. for the lifting of her husband's gravestone and the 'layng of the grave stone agayne'.[55] In other cases, however, the arrangements were more complicated. In 1445, when the Suffolk gentleman John Fastolf died, his widow Katherine had arranged for his burial place in Oulton church to be marked by an uninscribed stone. When, thirty years later, the time came for her to make her own burial arrangements, she provided for this to be removed and placed over the grave of her son, and an entirely new stone with brass shields of arms to be commissioned and put in its place.[56] In a few other cases it seems that temporary arrangements were made until both partners had died. In 1540 in a will requesting burial next to his first wife in Holy Trinity, Hull, Thomas Thomson asked his second wife to commission a stone bearing brasses of himself, his two wives, and their children—clearly implying that no such stone was already in place.[57] Not uncommonly, a cloth was placed over the grave until a permanent memorial was provided. In 1546 Henry Vincent of Westfield (Norfolk) instructed his executors to lay a black cloth over his grave 'for the space of one year until the stone be laid'.[58]

Whatever form the monument might take, the precise specifications for it would be set down in a contract with the sculptor. Relatively few contracts have come down to us; indeed, for the whole pre-Reformation period scarcely more than a dozen such documents have survived. The greater number of these examples relate to monuments of high status. There are two contracts for the tomb of King Richard II in Westminster Abbey. The first, dated 1 April 1395, was placed with the masons Henry Yevele and Stephen Lote for the Purbeck marble chest, while the other, dated three weeks later, was with the coppersmiths Nicholas Broker and Godfrey Prest for the gilt bronze effigies of the king and his queen (Fig. 18).[59] A much later contract for a royal tomb is the one agreed with the Italian Pietro Torregiani in 1511 for the monument to Lady Margaret Beaufort in Westminster Abbey; this was to be of black marble with an effigy of gilt bronze.[60] A series of contracts has survived for the mid-fifteenth-century monument of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick (d. 1439), in St Mary's, Warwick: John Essex, William Austen, and Thomas Stevens were to supply the baseplate and epitaph, William Austen and Bartholomew Lambspring the effigy, and John Borde of Corfe the marble chest (Fig. 22).[61] A number of contracts have survived for monuments produced by the Midlands alabastermen. The most famous is the contract of 1419 with Thomas Prentys and Robert Sutton for the tomb of Ralph Green and his wife at Lowick (Northants) (Fig. 11).[62] From the same year there are the related contracts with Robert Broun of London and with

[55] J. R. Greenwood, 'Wills and Brasses: Some Conclusions from a Norfolk Study', in J. Bertram (ed.), *Monumental Brasses as Art and History* (Stroud, 1996), 94.

[56] BL, Harley MS 10, fo. 121^{v}.

[57] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vi. 97–8.

[58] Greenwood, 'Wills and Brasses', 94.

[59] T. Rymer, *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae, etc.*, ed. G. Holmes (20 vols., London, 1704–35), vii.

[60] Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 31–2.

[61] P. Lindley, *Gothic to Renaissance: Essays on Sculpture in England* (Stamford, 1995), 62–9.

[62] Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 30.

Figure 18. Westminster Abbey: King Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, *c.*1395–7

Prentys and Sutton again for a monument to an earl of Salisbury and his wife at Bisham Abbey (Berks.).[63] From the early sixteenth century there is the contract with two Burton alabastermen, Harpur and Moorecock, to make a tomb for Sir Henry Foljambe at Chesterfield.[64] Only two contracts, apart from Broun's, have so far come to light with London tomb makers for non-royal tombs. One of these, from 1376 with Henry Lakenham, is for a tomb, now lost, to Sir Nicholas Loveine at St Mary Graces, London; and the other from nearly a century later with the marbler James Reames for Richard Willoughby's brass at Willoughby (Notts.) (Fig. 16).[65]

Typically, an agreement with a tomb maker specified what was required of him, and on what terms. Among the details laid down might be the following: the precise design of the monument—whether it was to be a brass or a relief effigy, or whether or not there was to be a tomb chest; the materials to be used (which might vary between different parts of the monument); where the monument was to be placed; the date by which it was to be delivered; and the cost to the patron and the arrangements for payment. Until the early sixteenth century, it was the usual practice in a composite commission—one involving a chest and effigies in different

[63] Bayliss, 'An Indenture'; G. M. Bark, 'A London Alabasterer in 1421', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 29 (1949), 89–91.

[64] *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, i (1834), 354.

[65] Blair, 'Henry Lakenham'; Nottingham University Library, Mi 5/168/34.

materials—for the work to be shared between various specialists. From Henry VII's time, however, under the influence of Italian practice, responsibility was generally assumed by one firm. In the case of Lady Margaret Beaufort's monument, Torregiani's workshop took on the production not only of the gilt metal effigy but also of the black marble chest. All but one of the contracts which have come down to us from the Middle Ages are final texts: documents preserved to resolve any disagreements that might arise. Just one, however, is a draft. This is the contract which Richard Willoughby made with James Reames in 1466. The text of this is littered with crossings-out and interlineations, apparently in the client's hand, the effect of which was to sharpen up the specifications. In this negotiation, as doubtless in others, constant pressure was exerted on the tomb maker by the client to ensure that he got what he wanted.[66] Further negotiation to clarify points of detail might well take place in the course of production. In her contract with Prentys and Sutton, Katherine Green left the details of the heraldry on her husband's tomb to be settled later. The inclusion of an orle and a motto on the male figure, not mentioned in the contract, were also probably decided on later.

Establishing initial contact with a workshop owed a lot to the working of informal networks. Prospective patrons of monuments tended to act on the recommendation of others—friends, relatives, neighbours, associates. Taste in funerary sculpture thus inclined to be conservative. Patrons stuck to monument types they knew, and they placed their contracts with workshops they knew. Particular types of memorial were favoured by families and family networks over generations. Grand alabaster monuments, for example, were the preference of generations of the Herberts at Abergavenny and of the Gascoignes and Redmans at Harewood (Yorks.). Brasses were commissioned over long periods by families such as the Malynses of Chinnor, the Catesbys of Ashby St Ledgers, and the Cobhams and Brookes at Cobham (Fig. 23). A taste for brasses can be found spreading across wide kinship networks. The case of the well-connected gentry family of Gaynesford of Crowhurst (Surrey) nicely illustrates the point. At the heart of the Gaynesford network were two successive heads of the family, both John, who are commemorated by brasses at Crowhurst. John the younger (d. 1460), who may have commissioned both memorials, was married to Katherine, daughter of Walter Green (d. 1456), who is commemorated by a brass of the same workshop at Hayes (Middx.). John and Katherine had a daughter Anne, who was married to Richard Bowett, and is commemorated by a brass at Checkendon (Oxon.). Katherine Gaynesford took as her second husband the Buckinghamshire gentleman Edmund Rede, commemorated by a brass, now fragmentary, at Boarstall (Bucks.). Towards the end of the century a collateral Gaynesford branch was established at Carshalton (Surrey) by Nicholas Gaynesford, younger brother of John II. In the 1480s Nicholas was commemorated by a brass at Carshalton showing him and his wife kneeling with their children. Shortly afterwards, Nicholas's son-in-law Robert White was commemorated by a brass of similar design and from the same workshop at South

[66] The most exacting client was perhaps John Gage in the 1590s: see above, 83.

Warnborough (Hants). At the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries three more brasses to members of the Gaynesford family were laid at Carshalton. One of them was to Nicholas's daughter Elizabeth and her husband Thomas Elmbridge (d. 1497). The Elmbridge family and their relatives were commemorated by brasses at Merstham (Surrey). In the early sixteenth century at least three more brasses were to be laid to Gaynesfords at Crowhurst. One of them was to the third wife of yet another John Gaynesford.[67]

A broadly similar story of taste running in families is told by the brasses of the Danvers family. Sir Robert Danvers (d. 1467), a justice of Common Pleas, and his wife were commemorated by a brass, now lost, at St Frideswide's (now Christ Church Cathedral) Oxford.[68] The judge's parents, John and Alice, were almost certainly the couple commemorated by a pair of hitherto unattributed brasses at Adderbury (Oxon.). The judge's second wife Katherine, the daughter of Drew Barentine of Great Haseley, came from a family which in the previous generation had commissioned brasses at Chalgrove (Oxon.); and she herself was to be commemorated by a brass, with her first husband, Sir William Fettiplace, at Aston Rowant (Oxon.). A close associate, and perhaps a kinsman, of the Danverses, Richard Quartermain of Rycote, had been commemorated with his wife by a brass at Thame a few years before. Early in the next century Sir John Danvers (d. 1514), a second cousin of the judge, and his wife were to be commemorated by brasses at Dauntsey (Wilts.).[69]

The working of kinship ties is often reflected in the consistent patronage of a particular workshop by a family or group of families. In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries brasses of London style 'B' were favoured by John, Lord Cobham and the Cobham collateral branches most closely associated with him. Over the same period brasses of style 'B' were regularly favoured by the Malyns family of Chinnor (Oxon.). In the third quarter of the fifteenth century style 'D' brasses were patronized by a group of north Midlands gentry—the Booths, Cliftons, and Willoughbys—who were all closely linked to one another. Ties of geography and association helped to generate custom for workshops as well as ties of blood. In the second quarter of the fifteenth century the networks linking a group of senior judges—John Martyn, John Cottesmore, and John Juyn—helped to produce business for 'B'. Personal recommendations made within occupational groups were of particular help to small workshops. At the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries style 'C', a minority London workshop, drew significant custom from a group of Richard II's chamber staff: John Cray, Sir George Felbrigg, Sir William Bagot, and Sir Nicholas Dagworth.[70] Sometimes recommendations

[67] For the Gaynesfords and their connections, see Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Top. Oxon. d. 195, fo. 193; G. R. French, 'A Brief Account of Crowhurst Church, Surrey, and its Monuments', *Surrey Archaeological Colls.* 3 (1865), 39–62; M. Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses in Surrey* (Bath, 1970), 94–111, 155–64, 357–65; *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1386–1421*, ed. J. S. Roskell, L. Clark, and C. Rawcliffe (4 vols., Stroud, 1992), iii. 232.

[68] J. Bertram, 'The Tomb Beneath the Loft', *Oxoniensia*, 63 (1998), 79–89.

[69] For the brass of Anne Danvers at Dauntsey, see below, 293.

[70] N. E. Saul, 'The Fragments of the Golafre Brass in Westminster Abbey', *TMBS* 15 (1992), 19–32, at 32.

were passed round networks in particular localities. Style 'E', for example, benefited from the custom of a group of proprietors in north and east Kent.[71]

Especially noteworthy is the adoption of particular memorial types by entire social groups. Brasses in particular seem to have benefited from this sort of group patronage. Elegant London-made civilian brasses won particular favour with the Cotswold wool merchants, who hardly ever extended their patronage to any other sort of memorial. University graduates and academics also gave their endorsement to brasses. Before the Reformation, many dozens of brasses were laid down in the college chapels and university churches of Oxford and Cambridge. The wool merchants and the academics both seem to have been attracted to brasses for the same reasons: they were cheap; and they did not consume space in often cramped and crowded surroundings.

What, then, did the act of choosing a monument mean in practice? Did it involve little more than following the recommendation of a kinsman or associate? Or was an element of discrimination involved?

There is much to suggest that patrons were instinctively unadventurous in their approach to commissioning. In most cases, they relied on personal recommendation when deciding which workshop to contact. Moreover, once establishing a tie with a particular workshop, they tended to stay with that workshop; they did not 'shop around'. This conservatism of approach was reinforced by the contemporary preference for authority over originality in design. The effect of this was to incline patrons to follow established models. In their wills, testators not uncommonly asked for their monument to be modelled on an existing one. In 1372 the earl of Pembroke asked for his tomb to 'be made as like as possible to the tomb of Elizabeth de Burgh in the Minories, London'. In 1394 Mary, Lady Roos asked for 'a marble stone for my tomb like the one that lies over Lady Margaret de Orby my grandmother in St Botolph's, Boston'.[72] In 1382 Michael de Northburgh, a canon of Chichester Cathedral, asked for a half-effigy like William Blyth's in the same cathedral.[73] Evidence of clients basing their monuments on examples known to them is afforded by extant monuments. John Strelley's monument of 1502 at Strelley (Notts.) is clearly modelled on Richard Willoughby's at nearby Wollaton. In big cathedrals the habit of copying existing memorials led to the laying of lots of look-alike memorials.[74] To seek models in monuments already in existence was natural in a world where access to market information was limited.

[71] There are 'E' brasses at Margate, which has four, Downe, Birchington, Gillingham, Sheldwich, and Graveney. For a network of clientage for 'E' in the Midlands, see N. E. Saul, 'The Brass of Sir Thomas le Strange at Wellesbourne, Warwickshire: Its Dating and its Place in the "E" Series', *TMBS* 15 (1994), 236–48.

[72] *Testamenta Vetusta*, ed. N. H. Nicolas (2 vols., London, 1826), i. 87; Ward (ed.), *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry*, 223. John Smyth of Coventry in 1501 asked for his monument to have 'like scripture and imagery' to that of William Maryner in the Greyfriars, London: TNA: PRO, PROB 11/13, fo. 47v.

[73] *Sussex Wills*, i, ed. W. H. Godfrey (Sussex Record Soc. 41, 1935), 275.

[74] See below, 186.

Yet, to be weighed against this evidence, is the evidence of patrons exercising discrimination in their preferences. Different monument types might be favoured by members of the same family in the space of a single generation. At Lingfield, for example, no settled preference is found in the taste of the Cobhams of Sterborough. Reginald, Lord Cobham (d. 1361) was commemorated by a freestone effigy on a chest (Fig. 52), while his daughter-in-law was commemorated by a brass of style 'B', his son by a brass of style 'A', and his grandson and his wife by alabaster effigies on a chest.[75] The diversity of patronage of the Sterborough Cobhams contrasts strikingly with the consistency of taste shown by the parent branch at Cobham itself. In some cases patrons are found making a clear break with the choices of earlier generations. In the 1460s and 1470s William Brown, a Stamford wool merchant, had commissioned three brasses from style 'B' and the craftsmen who succeeded it, despite the deteriorating quality of their work. In the next generation, however, the Browns are found taking their custom elsewhere; the three brasses commissioned by the family in the 1490s are from style 'D'.[76] Brown's heirs were evidently looking for work of better quality.

In general, the ability to switch between products or between workshops was often limited by lack, or relative lack, of choice. In southern England those looking for brasses were effectively confined to choosing between the two big workshops in London, while the possibility of choosing a chest with relief effigies was given only to the relatively wealthy. In the Midlands and north, however, the availability of a third medium—alabaster—made the possibility of choice far greater. Patrons could consider choosing between relief effigies, incised slabs, and brasses, and between effigies or slabs in alabaster and freestone.[77] The presence in some parts of England of provincial workshops opened the possibility of choice between a London-made product and a local product. At Tattershall (Lincs.) Norwich-made brasses and London-made products are found side by side. It would be wrong to suggest that medieval patrons understood 'choice' in the sense in which the term is understood today. In discriminating between workshops, or between the different products offered by those workshops, they were rarely swayed by purely aesthetic considerations. For the most part, their concern was with the representation of marks of status and of religious imagery. Yet they had no difficulty in identifying 'honest' workmanship, a quality to which the proper representation of status was related. In 1449 John Paston wrote to an unknown correspondent 'that the man at Sent Bridis is no klenly portrayer'; so

[75] Saul, *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England*, ch. 7.

[76] R. Emmerson, 'William Browne's Taste in Brasses', *TMBS* 12 (1978), 322–5.

[77] Thus in Yorkshire, only when there was a hiatus in production in the York workshops in the 1320s did patrons turn for effigies to outside producers, in either London or Lincoln: B. and M. Gittos, 'Motivation and Choice: The Selection of Medieval Secular Effigies', in P. Coss and M. Keen (eds.), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2002), 163.

the contract should be placed elsewhere.[78] In their search for honest and 'klene' workmanship, patrons were fully prepared to take their business from one workshop to another.

The process of negotiation by which a commission was placed for a monument is unfortunately largely hidden from view. A few glimpses are afforded by contracts. The two contracts for the tomb of an earl of Salisbury reveal the executor, in this case Richard Hertcombe, giving careful thought to where the work was to be placed, and assigning responsibility for the chest to one sculptor, the Londoner Robert Broun, and for the effigies to two others, the alabasters Prentys and Sutton. Particularly informative is the contract of 1466 which Richard Willoughby made with Reames, because it survives as a draft. Here we can see the process of negotiation resulting in amendments and interlineations which had the effect of giving the specifications a sharper edge. Willoughby employed an agent in his dealings with Reames—an associate, probably a lawyer, Geoffrey Staunton. Alice de la Pole likewise employed an intermediary, her chaplain Simon Brailes, in the commission for her husband's brass at the Charterhouse, Hull.[79] Isabella, countess of Warwick, employed an official called Thomas Porchalyn in the negotiations for her effigy at Tewkesbury.[80]

In many late medieval contracts one of the requirements was that the monument would be made according to a 'patron', a sketch or model of the proposed composition. Hertcombe's contract with Prentys and Sutton said that the effigies were to be made 'according to a pattern previously viewed by the parties'.[81] Richard Willoughby's contract with Reames provided that a 'patron' was to be delivered to the latter by Geoffrey Staunton.[82] In 1395 the contract for Richard II's tomb with Broker and Prest stated that the two coppersmiths were to work according to a 'patron' shown to them and 'remaining with the king's treasurer'.[83] It is not altogether clear whose responsibility it was to make and supply the 'patron'. One possibility is that the responsibility was assumed by the contractor; in other words, it was expected that the contractor would be skilled enough in draughtsmanship to supply a pattern to the client which, once approved, would serve as the working model. Two of the contracts, however, provided for the 'patron' to be shown to the tomb maker, not the other way round. In other words, the 'patron' was to be produced by the client or his representative. In the case of Richard II's tomb, a particularly prestigious commission, a professional artist may well have supplied a

[78] *Paston Letters and Papers*, i, no. 37.

[79] J. A. A. Goodall, *God's House at Ewelme* (Aldershot, 2001), 210–11, 298.

[80] Ward (ed.), *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry*, 224. The practice of employing an agent anticipates Sir William Paston's later employment of the services of Sir Thomas Knyvett: see above, 82.

[81] Bayliss, 'An Indenture', 24.

[82] Nottingham University Library, Mi 5/168/34.

[83] R. A. Brown, H. M. Colvin, A. J. Taylor, *History of the King's Works* (2 vols., London, 1963), i. 487.

model in line with the client's wishes. In the case of the other tombs, however, it is not inconceivable that the client himself or one of his agents was responsible for the sketch. Such a suggestion would be in line with the interest which clients can be seen to have taken in their commissions. A client of some accomplishment could indicate the layout of the composition even if he or she could not represent the figures.

Further light is shed on the process of commissioning of monuments by the executors' accounts which have come down to us—although these are few in number. Executors were required by canon law to keep a precise record of their disbursements from the deceased's estate, and they had to submit these accounts to the court responsible for administering the will before formal release from their duties. In the present context, the accounts of the executors of Walter de Merton, bishop of Rochester, who died in 1277, are of especial interest.[84] Bishop Walter was commemorated at Rochester by an expensive and highly unusual tomb effigy of Limoges enamel. The accounts reveal clearly the extent of the trouble the executors took to secure this exotic commission. One of the two parties actually made the journey to Limoges 'to oversee and arrange the making of the tomb'. The scene at Limoges must have resembled that depicted in an early fourteenth-century manuscript in which a patron is seen visiting an *atelier* and engaging in animated conversation with its manager.[85] When the bishop's tomb effigy was finished, a boy was sent to Limoges to arrange for its delivery to Rochester; Master Jean, the head of the workshop, was noted as accompanying it. Further expenses were incurred in commissioning a masonry canopy for the tomb and ordering a set of iron railings to go round it.

An early fourteenth-century set of accounts, those of the executors of Andrew de Kilkenny, dean of Exeter, show the very different arrangements made for the monument of a West Country dignitary.[86] Dean Kilkenny was a man of considerable means: he was a kinsman of William de Kilkenny, once bishop of Ely. In this case the tomb slab was no exotic foreign import; it was a cross slab ordered locally from a contractor in Exeter, who was probably only involved in tomb-making as a sideline. Because the tomb was of local origin, the costs incurred by the executors were much lower than the sums incurred for the bishop. The total amount which the executors spent on purchasing the slab, arranging for its delivery, and having it decorated was only £6. 12*s*. 5*d*., as opposed to the £60 expended for the bishop. Kilkenny's executors had more than enough money left to establish the perpetual chantry which he had requested.

One more set of accounts survives, for the executors of the will of Roger de Nassington, chancellor of Lichfield (d. 1367), who was buried in Lichfield Cathedral. In this case the sum of money involved was of roughly the same order as

[84] W. J. Blair, 'The Limoges Enamel Tomb of Bishop Walter de Merton', *CM* 10 (1995), 3–6.

[85] BL, Royal MS 14.E.iii, fo. 66^{v}: reproduced on the jacket of S. Badham and M. Norris, *Early Incised Slabs and Brasses from the London Marblers* (London, 1999).

[86] D. Lepine and N. Orme, *Death and Memory in Medieval Exeter* (Devon and Cornwall Record Soc. 46, 2003), 186.

for Kilkenny. £5. 8*s*. 7*d*. was spent on 'a stone'—almost certainly a brass—ordered from a certain woman ('cuidam mulieri') in London. Costs of 7*s*. were incurred in installing the 'stone' at Lichfield and in repairing the paving. A further £1. 12*s*. 0*d*. was spent on transporting the 'stone' to Lichfield. The most fascinating insight provided by these accounts is the evidence of the involvement of a woman in the funerary sculpture trade in London in the 1360s.[87]

THE COST AND DELIVERY OF MONUMENTS

The expenses incurred by executors lead naturally to the matter of the cost of monuments more generally. Fortunately, this is a subject on which a wealth of information is to be found in the sources. Wills provide us with many useful insights into how much testators saw fit to set aside for commemoration, while contracts tell us how much tomb makers actually charged.

Since monuments were provided in the Middle Ages for a wide range of patrons, they varied widely in price. An ambitious freestone monument with relief effigies and canopy could cost £100 or more, while a small-scale brass—a coat of arms and inscription, perhaps—a mere fraction of that. In the fifteenth century the rapid increase in levels of production had the effect of bringing the prices of some types of monument down appreciably. Comparison of prices across the centuries is admittedly difficult because of changes in the general price level. In real terms, however, it seems likely that monuments of the mass-produced type were cheaper at the end of the Middle Ages than they had been two centuries earlier.

The most expensive monuments were those of kings and senior members of the aristocracy. This was partly because of the ambitious scale of these monuments, size being a reflection of the dignity of the deceased; it was also partly a result of the expensive materials used, for royal effigies were usually of gilt metal. In the 1290s the goldsmith William Torel was paid a total of £138. 13*s*. 4*d*. for work on two royal effigies in Westminster Abbey, those of Henry III and Eleanor of Castile. The greater part of the money was accounted for by work on Queen Eleanor's effigy; however, since the sum of £30 was allowed for the 'images of the king and queen', it is hard to work out the precise distribution of costs across the two commissions. Substantial additional costs would have been incurred for the provision of the two elaborate chests.[88]

Another expensive monument was that of King Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, again in Westminster Abbey (Fig. 18). This, unlike the earlier monuments, was

[87] *Catalogue of the Muniments and Manuscript Books of the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield*, ed. J. C. Cox (William Salt Archaeological Soc. 6, 1886), 226. I am grateful to David Lepine for this reference. It is possible that the woman was Agnes Ramsey, daughter of the mason William Ramsey, and someone known to have been involved in the production of the monument of Queen Isabella, Edward II's widow, in 1358–9: J. Harvey, *English Medieval Architects: A Biographical Dictionary down to 1550* (2 edn., Gloucester, 1984), 244.

[88] Brown, Colvin, and Taylor, *History of the King's Works*, i. 482.

a joint commission consisting of a pair of gilt bronze effigies on a tomb chest. According to the contracts placed after Anne's death in 1394, Yevele and Lote were to supply the marble chest for £250, or £20 more if the work gave satisfaction, while the goldsmiths Broker and Prest were responsible for the copper gilt effigies at a cost of £400. In the event, the tomb proved to be more expensive than anticipated. Yevele's and Lote's estimate of £250 for the tomb chest turned out to be on target, although they never gained the £20 due to them for good workmanship; a serious cost over-run occurred on the two effigies, however, and by 1398 Broker and Prest had been paid a further £300. In all, the tomb cost the king £950.[89] With the possible exception of the Beauchamp tomb at Warwick, for which complete accounts are lacking, it was probably the most expensive English monument of the Middle Ages.

The monuments of the higher aristocracy were by no means comparable in cost with those of kings and their consorts: generally they were of stone or alabaster not gilt metal; nonetheless, they were still expensive. Depending on their size and elaboration, they generally cost between £40 and £200. The most expensive aristocratic monument in the medieval period may have been that of Richard Neville, earl of Salisbury, for which the earl allowed 200 marks;[90] whether the monument was ever executed, however, is doubtful, since Neville was a casualty of the Yorkist defeat at Wakefield in 1460. In the fourteenth century one of the most expensive commissions was the monument of John Hastings, earl of Pembroke, in St Paul's, for which the earl provided £140.[91] In the fifteenth century the price of a high-status sculpted monument gradually settled at around £100 or slightly less. In 1426 Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter, allowed precisely £100 for his monument in Bury St Edmunds Abbey, while a few years earlier the countess of Salisbury had set aside 100 marks (£66. 13*s*. 4*d*.) for her monument at Bisham (Berks.).[92] A monument of more modest scale could be obtained more cheaply. In 1426 William Hanningfield of Essex provided 50 marks (£33. 6*s*. 8*d*.) for a tomb chest with brasses to himself in Bicknacre Priory.[93] Five years later Walter, Lord FitzWalter set aside 40 marks for a tomb effigy of his mother in an arched recess in Dunmow Priory (Essex), while in 1458 Sir Edmund Mulsho set aside £40 for an alabaster tomb with effigy at Cavendish (Suffolk).[94] The evidence of cost provided by wills is broadly supported by the firmer evidence of contracts—although contracts for this period are relatively few. In 1419, when Richard Hertcombe commissioned a monument for an earl of Salisbury at Bisham, he spent a total of £60—43 marks for the alabaster effigies and £22. 13*s*. 4*d*. for the

[89] For the contracts, see Rymer, *Foedera*, vii. 795–8. Four years earlier Richard had commissioned a marble tomb ('tumbe marmorie') at King's Langley friary for his elder brother, Edward of Angoulême, who had died at the age of 6 in 1371. The cost of this was 100 marks: TNA: PRO, E403/533, 27 April; *Issues of the Exchequer, Henry III–Henry VI*, ed. F. Devon (London, 1847), 244.

[90] *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii. 240.

[91] *Testamenta Vetusta*, i. 87.

[92] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 361, 15.

[93] *Fifty Earliest English Wills*, ed. F. J. Furnivall (Early English Text Soc., Original Series, 78, 1882), 71.

[94] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 469; L. James, 'The Image of an Armed Man', *TMBS* 12 (1975–6), 54.

chest.[95] When Katherine Green commissioned the monument for herself and her husband in the same year, the cost came to £40 (Fig. 11).[96] For a middling knight or a gentleman, a simple effigy on a tomb chest in freestone could be obtained for considerably less. In 1376 the tomb chest and effigy which Sir Nicholas Loveine's executors commissioned for him from Lakenham cost only £17. 6*s*. 8*d*.[97] The annual income of a knight in this period would typically have been anywhere between £40 and £300.

For brasses the evidence of cost is much richer than for sculpted monuments. Wills are again the main source, but the figures in them are supported by the evidence of contracts and executors' accounts. At the beginning of the fourteenth century a large-scale canopied brass would probably have cost around £15–£20. Bishop Bitton's magnificent brass at Exeter, at the top of the range, cost 25 marks (£16. 13*s*. 4*d*.), while Bishop Gravesend's at St Paul's, probably another ambitious product, cost exactly £10.[98] The difference in cost between the two monuments may have been accounted for by the greater expense of carrying Bitton's brass to Exeter.

At the end of the century, costs remained broadly the same, but may have been a little lower. In 1397 Sir John de St Quintin set aside the sum of £13. 6*s*. 8*d*. for his huge York-made brass at Brandsburton (Yorks.). In 1394 Sir Richard atte Lese provided £10 exactly for a rather smaller canopied brass of himself and his wife at Sheldwich (Kent). In 1398 Sir Thomas Ughtred left the same amount for a brass to his parents at Catton (Yorks.). Early in the next century Sir Arnald Savage left £13. 6*s*. 8*d*. for a large canopied brass to his parents at Bobbing (Kent).[99]

In the mid-fifteenth century a medium-sized brass of two figures was typically priced at £5–£10. In 1478 Katherine Fastolf set aside '7 or 8 marks' for a brass to herself and her husband at Oulton (Suffolk), while in 1471 John Curzon set aside 8 marks for his two-figure brass at Bylaugh (Norfolk).[100] The brass which Richard Willoughby commissioned at Wollaton in 1466 cost 8 marks: good value for a substantial composition with badges, scrolls, and epitaph (Fig. 16).[101] The elaborate brass of his neighbour Sir Thomas Stathum (d. 1470) and two wives at Morley (Derby.), a product of the same workshop, cost just 6 marks (Fig. 17).[102]

Towards the end of the century, as unit costs fell further, brasses represented still better value. Modest or medium-sized brasses, which had earlier cost £5 or more, now cost £4 or less. Christopher Rawson's elaborate brass at All Hallows by the Tower, London, comprising three figures, an inscription, and a series of scrolls, cost him a mere 40*s*.[103] In Norfolk in the early sixteenth century, as Roger

[95] Bayliss, 'An Indenture'. [96] Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 30.

[97] Blair, 'Henry Lakenham', 68–9. [98] Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, 144.

[99] For these examples, see Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft*, 52; TNA: PRO, PROB 11/1, fo. 24^{r} (Sheldwich).

[100] BL, Harley MS 10, fos. 121^{v}, 307^{v}. For other examples, see R. H. D'Elboux, 'Testamentary Brasses', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 29 (1949), 183–91.

[101] Nottingham University Library, Mi 5/168/34. The substantial stone surrounds would, of course, have cost extra.

[102] Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft*, 52. [103] Ibid.

Greenwood's study has shown, many brasses were priced at 20*s*. or 13*s*. 4*d*.[104] A simple memorial of a chalice or coat of arms with inscription could probably be obtained for 10*s*. or less.[105]

The reason for the fall in price of brasses in the late fifteenth century was simply that brasses were being bought by an ever larger patron class. In the fourteenth century a high proportion of memorials produced had been ambitious commissions for knights and senior clergy. By the mid-fifteenth century the workshops were producing large numbers of stock figures of civilians and country parsons, and costs fell accordingly. At the same time, the emergence of regional workshops at Coventry, Norwich, York, and other centres made it possible for patrons to buy brasses locally. In this way substantial cuts could be achieved in delivery costs, which might be considerable in the case of brasses brought a long way from London. As prices came down, brasses became ever more attractive to such patrons as country clergy and the newly prosperous lesser gentry. In the north Midlands and northern counties, where stone was abundant, incised slabs constituted another very popular form of memorial. A medium-sized incised slab with a single figure, laid in the floor, could probably be obtained for as little as £4–£5.[106] De luxe brasses and slabs were still produced for clients of high status. A good example is provided by the magnificent brass of Sir Roger Le Strange (d. 1506) at Hunstanton (Norfolk), which cost £26. 13*s*. 4*d*.[107] The majority of patrons of brasses, however, were now middling or lesser folk. A freeholder on an annual income of £4–£8 would find it well within his means to buy a brass at 20*s*. to assist the passage of his soul through purgatory.

How long did it take for a monument to be laid in a church? And what were patrons' expectations on delivery time? Again, a good deal of light is shed by the evidence of contracts and wills.

How quickly a monument was delivered depended largely on the size of that monument and the materials employed in its making. A large alabaster effigy on a tomb chest would have taken longer to produce and set in place than a small brass arms and inscription. A big canopied monument from one of the main workshops would probably have taken a year or more to arrive. When in February 1419 Katherine Green placed the contract for her and her husband's tomb with Prentys and Sutton, she asked for delivery in fourteen months—by Easter 1420.[108] In the next century, when Sir Roger Le Strange of Hunstanton made provision for his memorial, he said, more flexibly, that the tomb should be ready 'within twelve months and two years'.[109] Delivery in the space of twelve months seems to have been perfectly practicable. In 1401, when Agnes Arundel made arrangements for

[104] Greenwood, 'Wills and Brasses', 86–92.

[105] A very small figure brass could probably be got for 10*s*. in the early 16th cent. In 1515 John Stockton left this amount for a brass which survives at Hayes (Kent); it is 12 inches high (G. Barrow, 'The Ten-Shilling Brass', *MBS Bulletin*, 17 (Feb. 1978), 18).

[106] Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, i. 18. The evidence for the cost of incised slabs, however, is very slight.

[107] Greenwood, 'Wills and Brasses', 92.

[108] Bayliss, 'An Indenture', 24; Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 30.

[109] Greenwood, 'Wills and Brasses', 92.

burial next to her husband in Rochester Cathedral, she said that she was to be placed under his brass, which had only been laid in the previous year.[110]

The reason for the widespread insistence on delivery in a year is to be found in the needs of liturgical observance. On the deceased's 'year's day'—that is, his anniversary—the funeral service would be re-enacted around his burial place; and it was expected that the tomb slab would be in place for the occasion. A handful of more exacting testators, however, asked for their memorial to be in place for an earlier anniversary—the 'month's mind'. In 1558 Thomas Salter, a London chantry priest, asked that his brass be laid in St Magnus Martyr, London Bridge, 'against my monethes mynde day'.[111] Delivery of a brass in this time was scarcely practicable even for a big, well-organized workshop. None the less, there were always testators who insisted on it. In Norfolk most of these appear to have been clergy. Even before the 'month's mind' became a widely observed anniversary, there were patrons who insisted on a tight deadline. In letters of 1 May 1305 George Saunford asked that a 'stone' to commemorate his uncle, which he had requested in return for a grant of land to the monks of Westminster, be in place by Pentecost (6 June).[112] Quite possibly, Saunford made this stipulation so that his uncle's 'year's day' could be marked.

Even when the delivery time of one year was requested, it is clear on the evidence of the monuments themselves that delays in memorialization could sometimes occur. Nearly two decades were to elapse before a brass was laid for the Hampshire knight Sir John de Lisle. Sir John had died in 1407, yet his brass at Thruxton (Hants) bears the hallmarks of a product of the mid-1420s. In the case of testamentary memorials, it is possible that the main responsibility for delay rested with the executors. John Paston II brought shame upon himself with his failure to provide a proper tombstone for his father at Bromholm. John senior, the head of the family, had died in London in May 1466; yet five years later no monument had yet been put in place over the grave. Margaret, his mother, wrote to her younger son: 'It is a shame, and a thing much spoken of in this country, that your father's gravestone is not made. For God's love, let it be remembered and purveyed for in haste.' Another five years after this, and by now a decade after John I's death, still nothing had been done. John III now wrote to his mother: 'A man from the prior of Bromholm (has) let me have knowledge of the ill speech (in Norfolk) now that the tomb is not made'; the prior, he added, had suggested that a new piece of cloth be placed over the grave.[113] As Bromholm Priory is now ruinous, it cannot be established for certain whether the tomb was ever eventually made.[114]

The story of John Paston II's neglect of his father's tomb has done much to colour modern, usually unfavourable, views of executors. Yet it is clear that the cause of

[110] Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Arundel, i, fo. 183^{r}.

[111] J. R. Greenwood, 'The Will of Thomas Salter of London, 1558', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 38 (1983), 284.

[112] Westminster Abbey Muniments, Muniment Book 11, fo. 563^{v}.

[113] *Paston Letters and Papers*, i, nos. 212, 264, 371.

[114] It is possible that the indent of an armed figure now in Paston church is the slab, moved at the Dissolution: R. Greenwood and M. Norris, *The Brasses of Norfolk Churches* (Norwich, 1976), 49.

the neglect was the unique difficulty of the Pastons' financial circumstances. In the 1460s and early 1470s the family were engaged in ruinously expensive litigation to cling onto the estates bequeathed to them by their patron, Sir John Fastolf. Even when the worst of the struggle was over, by the late 1470s, they lived in straitened circumstances. By 1478 John II was so short of cash that he was reduced to selling the gold cloth from his father's bier to meet the bills for the proposed tomb.[115] It would be unwise to generalize too much from this one, perhaps rather exceptional, case.

Genuine financial difficulty, moreover, has to be distinguished from wilful neglect on the part of executors. The only contemporary evidence for executors deliberately cheating on a deceased is to be found in doggerel verses found on some epitaphs castigating them for dishonesty. The verses were inscribed on brasses at, among other places, Kelshall (Herts.) (Fig. 78) and St Edmund's, Lombard St, London:

> For widows be sloful, and children beth unkind,
> Executors be covetos, and kepal that they fynd.[116]

It is not altogether clear how much value can be placed on these couplets, which had their roots in popular moralizing—possibly very little. When consideration is given to the work which executors did, they can hardly be said to have deserved their ill repute. Because of the tight accounting procedures prescribed by the Church, executors were given little opportunity to practise corruption. We have seen that they had to have their accounts approved by the court administering the will before being discharged from their duties. To judge from the handful of accounts which have come down to us, executors seem to have gone about their business conscientiously enough. They were invariably drawn from the ranks of those personally close to the deceased. In a world in which the living were held to exist in a relationship of mutual dependence with the dead, this meant that they would have felt obliged to honour the deceased's wishes. There are many indications that, so far as the commissioning of monuments was concerned, they acted with due dispatch. The evidence of the few extant executors' accounts points strongly to speedy action on their part. So too, remarkably, does the evidence of the monuments themselves. When the details of armour and costume on effigies are examined—the details on which close dating depends—it is apparent that most monuments must have been made within a fairly short time of the deceased's death. The foundation of a chantry to accompany the monument might lead to difficulties, involving as it did the transfer of land; and here delays might be encountered.[117] So far as the monuments themselves are concerned, however,

[115] *Paston Letters and Papers*, i, no. 311.

[116] H. Haines, *A Manual of Monumental Brasses* (London, 1861, repr. Bath, 1970), clxxx; R. Emmerson, 'Monumental Brasses: London Design, *c*.1420–1485', *JBAA* 131 (1978), 51.

[117] Or, indeed, ultimate failure. At Warbleton (Sussex) Dean William Prestwick provided for a perpetual chantry for the benefit of his soul and those of his parents. The chantry, however, appears never to have been established, even though his executors obtained a licence for the alienation of the land (*CPR 1441–6*, 143, 144). None the less, Prestwick got his magnificent brass (Fig. 14).

the trust which testators placed in their executors appears not to have been misplaced.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF COMMEMORATION

The last matter to require consideration is that of burial location. What sorts of church did patrons want to be buried in? And in what part of the church did they seek burial? Medieval churches were highly ordered spaces, which were the subject of close regulation by the authorities. The various parts of the building carried meanings which were articulated both architecturally and in liturgical division. Burial practices both contributed to the ordering of space within a church and were deeply affected by it.

In their wills testators expressed views on burial location in varying degrees of detail. A small number gave very precise instructions, particularly those who had already made necessary arrangements in their lifetimes. Much the greater number, however, simply indicated which church they wanted to be buried in—or which part of that church they wanted to be buried in. Roger Sencler (d. 1425), for example, asked to be buried in Erith church, and John Cobham (d. 1399) under the bell tower of Hever.[118] Just a few showed no interest in the matter at all, requesting burial 'where God wills'.

The distribution of burials across categories of church changed somewhat over the period. Before the late thirteenth century, top position in the hierarchy of desirability was occupied by the monastic houses. Large numbers of well-to-do layfolk requested interment in the churches, cloisters, and chapter houses of fashionable high-status abbeys. From the fourteenth century, however, when chantries provided an effective alternative to monastic intercession, there was a shift to burial in parish churches; it was here, typically, that the gentry sought burial. For many late medieval testators a popular alternative to burial in parish or monastic churches was burial in a mendicant house. Among the courtly aristocracy, there was intense demand for burial in such fashionable London mendicant houses as the Grey Friars or the Austin Friars. Urban testators and middling country freeholders usually opted for burial in a parish church. By the sixteenth century, in many urban churches there was intense pressure on space for burials.

Until the late twelfth century very few laity had been granted the privilege of intra-mural burial. It was generally only people with particular claims on the privilege—founders and principal benefactors—who would be accorded the honour of burial within the walls. The great majority of layfolk, even those of will-making rank, would be buried in churchyards or, in the towns, in large cemeteries. The 'pardonchurchyard' near St Paul's became a particularly popular burial place in London. In the late medieval period, when intra-mural burial

[118] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/3, fo. 34r; Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Arundel, i, fo. 165r.

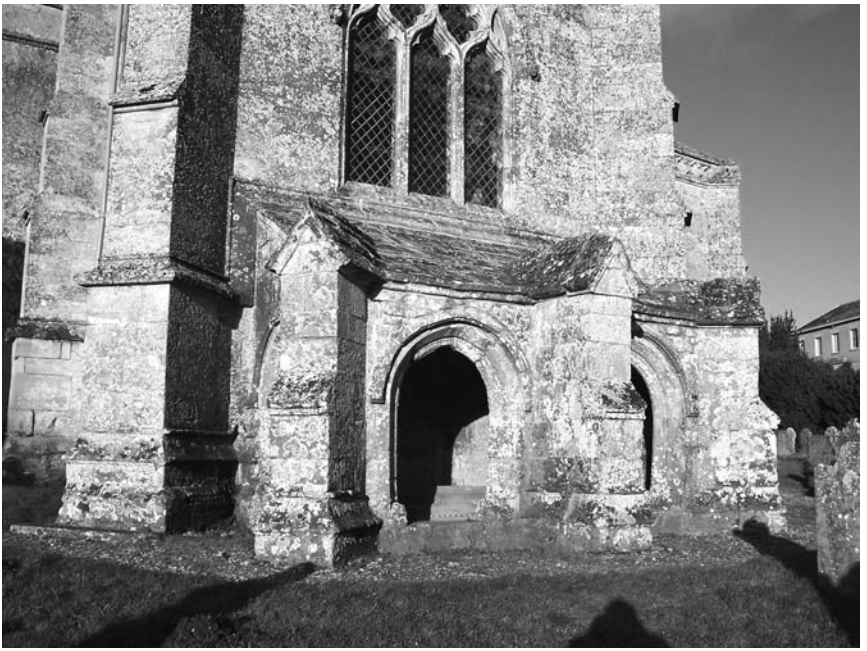

Figure 19. Bishopstone (Wilts.): external tomb arcade

became more common, some distinguished layfolk, in a show of humility, still asked to be buried outside. Joan, Lady Cobham (d. 1369), asked to be buried in the churchyard of St Mary Overy, Southwark—by the door with the image of the Virgin Mary over it.[119]

Extra-mural burial, however, did not necessarily rule out the possibility of memorialization. A number of those who requested burial outside specifically asked for a monument. In 1480 William Turke, a London fishmonger, asked for 'a stone with a scripture thereon remembering my name' over his grave in the churchyard of St Margaret, Bridge St., while Joan, Lady Cobham gave instructions for a cross brass to go over her grave at Southwark.[120] A not insubstantial number of monuments were commissioned especially for external positions. A large canopied and gabled monument to a priest was placed against the outside wall at Great Brington (Northants). A cross slab protected by a rich external arcade shelters against the transept wall at Bishopstone (Wilts.) (Fig. 19). Not

[119] J. W. Flower, 'Notices of the Family of Cobham of Sterborough Castle, Lingfield, Surrey', *Surrey Archaeological Colls.* 2 (1864), 169. Richard Poynings also asked for a brass outside—in his case, in the cemetery of Poynings church (Sussex): TNA: PRO, PROB 11/3, fo. 110^{v}.

[120] V. Harding, 'Burial Choice and Burial Location in Late Medieval London', in S. Bassett (ed.), *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 1000–1600* (Leicester, 1992), 129; Flower, 'Notices of the Family of Cobham', 169.

all external monuments, however, were as ambitious as these. The commonest types of memorial were simple upright grave markers or horizontal coped slabs, from which the water could drain off—a good example being that at Darrington (Yorks.).[121]

From the mid-thirteenth century, however, the right to intra-mural burial of certain high-status patrons was by stages conceded in synodal legislation. Burial inside for limited groups was conceded at Worcester in the 1240s and at Chichester in 1292.[122] The chancel being the recognized place for clergy burials, the areas most commonly used for the laity were the nave, transepts, or side chapels. Examples of thirteenth-century lay burials in these positions are found at Walkern (Herts.) and Curry Rivel (Som.). By the end of the century pressure was intensifying for lay burials in the chancel, the liturgical heart of the church, and the place where intercessory prayer could most effectively be prompted. Members of the royal family secured burial rights around the high altar of Westminster Abbey from 1290, and the de Clare and Despenser families similar rights at Tewkesbury Abbey early the next century. By the 1320s and 1330s members of the gentry were developing a taste for burial in these same areas. Tomb recesses for knightly burials were cut into the chancel walls at Little Shelford (Cambs.) and Wickhampton (Norfolk), while at Cobham (Kent) the first of what were to be a great many chancel burials were made by the Cobham family (Fig. 23). By the mid-fifteenth century, chancel burial was becoming relatively common for those of noble and gentle rank. In most cases the preferred place of interment was the honorific north side of the high altar. Here the tomb could be made to do service as a repository for the Easter Sepulchre, in this way benefiting from the attentions of the parish in Holy Week.[123]

Burials of the middling and lesser laity were scattered round the ritually less prestigious parts of the church. In large urban churches concentrations of burials might be made in chapels associated with particular guilds. At Cirencester, for example, the Trinity Chapel, on the north side of the nave, was much favoured by the town's governing elite and local gentry. Some laity who expressed a preference sought burial next to an altar at which they had regularly worshipped. At Chalfont St Peter (Bucks.) William Whaplode asked for burial in front of the altar of Our Lady, while at Windsor Nicholas Hertele sought interment in a tomb he had prepared before St Stephen's altar.[124] Burial in the proximity of popular images was also much sought after. At Rainham (Essex) Joan Swinborne asked to be buried by an image of the Crucifixion, while in Rochester Cathedral a number of testators were buried before the image of St Ursula.[125] At St Pancras, Winchester, Long Melford, and elsewhere burials were made along the length of the nave on

[121] Ryder, *Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in West Yorkshire*, 20.

[122] R. Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Stroud, 2004), 173.

[123] See below, 162–3.

[124] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/3, fo. 244^{v}; PROB 11/2A, fo. 50^{r}.

[125] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/3, fo. 131^{v}; W. H. St John Hope, 'The Architectural History of the Cathedral Church and Monastery of St Andrew at Rochester', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 23 (1898), 291.

the line of the processional path followed before High Mass on Sunday;[126] burials on this axial line can often be spotted by the rows of brassless indents along the way. Sometimes testators asked to be interred next to the place where they had sat in church. A York testator, Alan of Alnwick, who died in 1374, asked to be buried by his seat in the chancel of St Michael le Belfry, while Alexander Neville in 1456 specified burial by 'the stall where I sitt at mese'.[127] These references point to an increasing tendency for high-status layfolk to sit in the chancel, a factor which doubtless encouraged burials there. A desire to be buried close to a kinsman, patron, or employer was also expressed by some testators. James Arblaster of Norfolk asked to be buried next to his lord, the earl of Oxford, while Canon Langton of Exeter requested burial next to the tomb of his kinsman Bishop Stafford (Fig. 28).[128]

Burial *intra muros* necessarily involved the deceased's family or executors in financial outlay. For the privilege of intra-mural burial a fee would be charged. The size of the fee usually varied in accordance with the status of the position chosen. The most prestigious and expensive positions were those in the chancel or next to certain altars. At St Andrew Hubbard, London, a charge of 6*s*. 8*d*. was made for burial in the chancel, and 3*s*. 4*d*. for the same in the nave.[129] At some churches a fee might even be charged for burial in the churchyard. For the difficult physical work of digging the grave and laying the stone, payments would have to be made to such church officials as the sexton.[130] By the seventeenth century charges were usually made for the construction of monuments in churches of high status.[131]

Negotiations would also be needed with the church authorities about the choice of burial site and the manner of the deceased's commemoration. In most big churches an informal set of conventions governed the geography of burial. In Exeter Cathedral, for example, the choir, the liturgical heart of the church, was reserved for bishops, while deans, dignitaries, and canons had to be content with burial in the transepts and nave. In most cathedrals and abbeys no lay burials were permitted in the areas deemed most sacred.[132] At Durham, a cathedral of especial sanctity because it possessed the shrine of St Cuthbert, no layfolk at all were buried anywhere in the church before the late fourteenth century.[133] Testators usually showed due

[126] N. Rogers, 'Hic Iacet . . . : The Location of Monuments in Late Medieval Parish Churches', in C. Burgess and E. Duffy (eds.), *The Parish in Late Medieval England* (Donington, 2006), 261–77.

[127] M. Aston, 'Segregation in Church', in W. J. Sheils and D. Wood (eds.), *Women and the Church* (Studies in Church History, 27, 1990), 245.

[128] C. Richmond, *The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century: Endings* (Manchester, 2000), 184; *Register of Edmund Stafford*, ed. F. C. Hingeston-Randolph (London, 1886), 404–5.

[129] *The Church Records of St Andrew Hubbard, Eastcheap, c.1450–c.1570*, ed. C. Burgess (London Record Soc. 34, 1999), 159, 228. 6*s*. 8*d*. appears to have been the going rate; for other examples, see Rogers, 'Hic Iacet . . . ', 263. For pricing by location in the early modern period, see V. Harding, *The Dead and the Living in Paris and London, 1500–1670* (Cambridge, 2002), 128.

[130] At St Andrew Hubbard in the 16th cent. the cost of replacing the paving after a burial in the church was 2*s*.: *The Church Records of St Andrew Hubbard*, 158.

[131] For the charges at St George's, Windsor, see S. M. Bond (ed.), *The Monuments of St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle* (Windsor, 1958), xiv–xv.

[132] Lepine and Orme, *Death and Memory in Medieval Exeter*, 25–32.

[133] *Rites of Durham*, ed. J. T. Fowler (Surtees Soc. 107, 1903), 58.

respect for clerical sensitivities on the geography of burial. Those testators who requested burial in a cathedral generally sought to involve the dean or prior in the negotiations over choice of burial place. Sir Thomas Erpingham, for example, said in his will that he was to be buried in Norwich Cathedral in a place agreed with the prior.[134] Thirty years earlier Bishop Sheppey likewise made provision for consultation when requesting interment in his cathedral of Rochester.[135]

Testators likewise generally responded with appropriate sensitivity to the perceived hierarchy of decorum in commemoration. They appreciated that in some parts of a church display was permissible, while in others it was not. Some testators appear to have given thought to whether a proposed tomb would fit in. In 1511 Robert Fabyan, a London draper, laid two options before his executors: if he were buried in a city church, he said, he was to have 'a litell tumbe of freestone, upon which I will be spent liiis ivd att the most'; should he be interred elsewhere, however, then a marble stone—presumably a brass—was to be provided.[136] Isabella, countess of Warwick, was worried lest her plans for a chantry in Tewkesbury Abbey might upset the monastic community: she provided in her will for jewels to be sold off and the money be given to the monks as a peace offering.[137] Sometimes, however, a patron of high status would just disregard the conventions. In those circumstances, the authorities would step in. In 1302 the archbishop of Canterbury no less wrote to the prior of Worcester, ordering the dismantling of a tomb which Bishop Giffard had constructed which, he had heard, was too high, obscuring the flow of light to the high altar.[138] The tomb was duly taken down.

If most of those who sought burial in churches showed respect for their surroundings, none the less in the late Middle Ages there was a trend towards greater commemorative showiness. High-status monuments tended to become grander and more opulent, and the positions they occupied more eye-catching. The kinds of monuments which had stood out in one century did not necessarily do so in the next. The tomb effigy of the elder William Longespée in Salisbury Cathedral, for example, would have stood out when it was first installed in the Lady Chapel in 1226; seventy years later, however, it no longer did so, and Bishop Nicholas Longespée provided a chest for it to stand on (Fig. 20).[139] In the late Middle Ages the influence of patrons, both clerical and lay, became steadily greater in churches.[140] This was particularly so in churches serving the needs of chantry

[134] BL, Harley MS 10, fo. 165^{r}.

[135] Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Islip, fo. 169^{v}.

[136] *Testamenta Vetusta*, ii. 510. At Sprotborough (Yorks.) William Fitzwilliam asked to be commemorated in such a way that those celebrating the liturgy would not be obstructed: in practice this turned out to mean a brass (*Testamenta Eboracensia*, iii, ed. J. Raine (Surtees Soc. 45, 1864), 212).

[137] Ward (ed.), *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry*, 224.

[138] *The Worcester Liber Albus*, ed. J. M. Wilson (London, 1920), 21–3.

[139] The effigy stood at the entrance to the Lady Chapel. It was probably the first high-status lay burial in the cathedral. It was moved by Wyatt to its present position in the nave. At Worcester in the early 16th cent., King John's effigy was likewise raised up on a marble chest.

[140] A. Martindale, 'Patrons and Minders: The Intrusion of the Secular into Sacred Spaces in the Late Middle Ages', in D. Wood (ed.), *The Church and the Arts* (Studies in Church History, 28, 1992), 143–78.

Figure 20. Salisbury Cathedral: William Longespée, Earl of Salisbury (d. 1226)

colleges, where tombs were placed in positions where they would be certain to attract attention. At Strelley, for example, the tomb of the founder, Sir Sampson de Strelley (d. 1390), was placed in the middle of the chancel, blocking the way to the altar; at Lingfield (Surrey) some fifty years later the tomb of another founder, Sir Reginald Cobham of Sterborough, was placed in the same position. While admittedly such positioning could be justified in terms of the honour properly due to a founder, it represented a challenge to the conventions of decorum in churches. In the chantry colleges of fifteenth-century England we can detect something of the proprietorial high-handedness which was to become such a characteristic of funerary commemoration in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

6

Function and Meaning

'ORATE PRO ANIMA': PRAY FOR THE SOUL

On the eve of Agincourt, Shakespeare's Henry V assures the French envoy that if his men return to England their memory will live on in brass:

> A good many of our bodies shall no doubt
> Find native graves; upon the which, I trust,
> Shall witness live in brass of this day's work.[1]

The king's prediction was amply fulfilled. Thomas, Lord Camoys, commander of his left wing, was to be commemorated by a brass at Trotton (Sussex), John Harpedon, another captain, by a brass in Westminster Abbey, and Thomas Chaworth and John Reynes, two esquires, by brasses at Launde (Leics.) and Clifton Reynes (Beds.) respectively.

Shakespeare's notion of historical memory, however, was very different from 'memory' as it has been understood in Henry's own time. Shakespeare's thinking was influenced by Renaissance ideas of humanism. In his eyes, monuments honoured the worldly achievements of the commemorated; they were witnesses to the deceased's greatness in life: or, as Weever put it in 1630, reminders of 'some remarkable action, fit to be transferred to future posterities'.[2] Two centuries earlier monuments had been concerned not so much with the affairs of this world as of the world to come. They were commissioned to perform one function above all: to elicit intercessory prayer for the dead.

Monuments in the Middle Ages had their setting in the context of Catholic theology. Their immediate justification was provided by the Church's doctrine of purgatory, which held that the soul had to be refined or purified before it could enter heaven. In contemporary thinking, the refining process could be accelerated by the offer of prayers by the living—prayers in the Mass being considered especially efficacious. If those who attended funerals or who gazed on tombs could offer up the appropriate intercessory aid for the deceased, the latter's soul would benefit. The purpose of commissioning monuments was to enlist prayerful assistance from clergy, friends, and onlookers alike. Monuments were an essential weapon in the battle for salvation of the soul.

[1] W. Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, Act IV, Scene 3, ll. 95–7.
[2] J. Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (London, 1631), 1.

Theologians allowed that monuments might also be of value in providing solace to the living: St Augustine himself had used the phrase 'solace for the living'.[3] It was recognized that the act of commissioning a monument as a focus of commemoration contributed to the process of grieving and coming to terms with loss. At the same time, sympathy was shown for the view that laying a stone in a church showed a sense of propriety and maintained a family's reputation. There was no support for the idea that such considerations might constitute the primary motive of commemoration; indeed, in the fifth century St Augustine had been mildly contemptuous of them. But by the late Middle Ages, at least in the work of St Thomas, their role did at least receive recognition.

The essentially religious character of the monument was reflected in its construction and design.[4] On the epitaph the opening words were often 'Orate pro anima . . .' ('pray for the soul of . . .'), while at the end there was usually a plea for God's mercy—'cuius anime propitietur Deus Amen'. Details of good works would be given for the intercessor to place before the Almighty. On many thirteenth-century monuments and some later, offers of pardon were extended to those who prayed for the deceased. Only one piece of biographical information was regularly included. This was the deceased's date of death, given so that his or her obit or anniversary requiem could be celebrated. For those lacking in the skill of literacy, the message of urgency was conveyed through signifiers in the overall design. Where there was an effigy, the figure was shown at prayer: to encourage a prayerful attitude on the part of the onlooker. On the more elaborate monuments the figures of patron saints were included to convey the impression of support from those seated alongside the Almighty. The growing complexity of monuments by the fifteenth century owed much to patrons' desire to increase their effectiveness as stimuli to intercession.

The role of the monument as a generator of prayer emerges clearly from the instructions given by testators in their wills. In 1395 Sir Robert Bardolf asked for a tomb to be placed in Mapledurham church 'so that prayers may be said for me the more decently'.[5] In 1519 Thomas Sharrington, a Norfolk esquire, asked for a brass on a raised tomb, so that the inscription with the appeal for prayers would be noticed 'by all Christian souls'.[6] In 1441 Thomas Holden, an Oxford administrator, asked that his and his wife's memorial in St Mary's Hall should have an inscription requesting the canons to pray for their souls in perpetuity, just as they would for the souls of the founders.[7] In 1433 Thomas Polton, bishop of Worcester, asked for a brass to be laid at Mildenhall (Wilts.) to his parents and six brothers, carrying the figures of all eight of them, 'so that people would be stirred to pray for our souls when they look at the stone with its figures'.[8] In 1509 Richard Surland, a canon of St George's, Windsor, asked for a brass 'with a scripture under

[3] S. Badham, 'Status and Salvation: The Design of Medieval English Brasses and Incised Slabs', *TMBS* 15 (1996), 414. [4] The design of monuments is discussed in detail below, Ch. 7.
[5] *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, iii. 102.
[6] Norfolk Record Office, NCC Will Register 34 (Brigges), fo. 152^{v}.
[7] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 580. [8] Ibid. 489.

shewyng who lyeth here to thentent I may be the more remembered helpen and relevid by the helpe and prayers of good charitable cristen men'.[9] In the light of these and many similar injunctions, there can be no doubting the role played by purgatorial fear in spurring commemoration. It was precisely this fear that led the Oxford academic Ralph Hamsterley, *c*.1517, to commission no fewer than five brasses to himself, one in each of the churches or chapels with which he was associated. Hamsterley was not concerned with self-glorification: on one of the brasses he was shown as a worm-eaten skeleton. His aim was to maximize the flow of intercession.

In the late Middle Ages there were significant developments in the provision of intercessory supplication which gave new encouragement to the commissioning of monuments. The dominance which the monastic institutions had long exercised in the offering of such prayer was challenged by the appearance of chantries. Chantries, endowed Masses for the soul of the founder and those named by him, brought the possibility of post-obit commemoration within the range of a much wider patron class. Chantries in the late Middle Ages took a variety of forms. A substantial, well-endowed perpetual chantry could have a physical existence as a chapel built onto the side of a church. A smaller chantry with a fixed term could be more an occasion than a place—a liturgical celebration at regular intervals at an existing altar. Many thousands of chantries were founded in late medieval England, particularly in the century from 1280 to 1380. When a chantry foundation was made, in almost every case it was accompanied by a physical memorial. The function of the memorial was to act as a focal point for the offering of intercession. At St Frideswide's, Oxford, in 1348 the conventual community agreed that the daily Office of the Dead endowed by Lady Montagu should be said 'at her tomb'.[10]

The grandest medieval chantry foundations were those in the elegant stone cages which lined the side aisles of the great churches. A particularly fine series, mostly commissioned by members of the Despenser family, surrounds the choir and the high altar of Tewkesbury Abbey. The connection between chantry foundation and physical memorialization—between the two senses of the word commemoration—is most clearly illustrated by the grandest foundation of all, the Beauchamp Chapel at Warwick (Fig. 21).[11]

The chantry of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, was established in accordance with the terms of the earl's will of 1437:

I will . . . that my body be entered within the Church Collegiate of our Lady in Warwick, where I will that such Place as I have devised (which is known well) there may be made a

[9] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/16, fo. 20r.

[10] A. M. Morganstern, 'The Tomb as Prompter for the Chantry: Four Examples from Late Medieval England', in E. Valdez del Alamo and C. S. Prendergast (eds.), *Memory and the Medieval Tomb* (Aldershot, 2000), 88.

[11] For the Beauchamp Chapel, see G. H. Cook, *Medieval Chantries and Chantry Chapels* (London, 1968), 197–202; P. Lindley, *Gothic to Renaissance: Essays on Sculpture in England* (Stamford, 1995), 62–5.

Figure 21. St Mary's, Warwick: the Beauchamp Chapel

Chappell of our Lady, well, faire and goodly built, within the middle of which Chappell I will, that my Tombe be made.

The tomb and chapel together were some twenty-one years in the making. The earl's executors obtained a mortmain licence from the crown for endowment of the chapel a few months after his death in 1439. Two years later a commission was issued to John Mayell, Thomas Kerver, and John Skinner, all of Warwick, to employ carpenters and labourers and to pay them out of the late earl's goods. The foundation stone of the chapel was laid in 1443 by the executors themselves. Work on the fabric appears to have been largely completed by the mid-1460s, by which time a sum of more than £2,000 had been spent. Consecration took place in 1475. Work on the early stages of the earl's monument began in 1448, when payments to the sculptor John Massingham and the painter 'Clare' were made for the preparatory designs for the gilt bronze effigy (Fig. 22). In 1450 contracts were placed for the casting and gilding of the effigy, and around the same time a Purbeck marble tomb chest was ordered from the marbler, John Bourde. In 1452 a further contract was placed with William Austen for the weepers and angels, these to be

Figure 22. St Mary's, Warwick: Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick (d. 1439)

fitted in housings around the chest. The latten base plate and marginal inscription were commissioned in 1454.

The earl's monument was conceived as the focal point of an ambitious iconographic scheme which spread right across the chapel uniting its various parts. Its theme was the earl's reception into the kingdom of heaven. The earl's upward ascent is serenaded by a chorus of angels which runs along the traceried lights of the windows. From the summit of the east window the golden figure of the Almighty, holding the world in His hand, looks down benevolently. The earl's hands are drawn apart (though in prayerful posture), as if in wonder at this unfolding vision; and his gaze is fixed upwards on the figure of the Virgin Mary on the central boss of the vault. The earl's effigy, though a witness to worldly status, gives eloquent expression to the Christian vocation to which knighthood was dedicated.

Earl Richard provided for the establishment of his chantry in his will. Many other patrons, fearful that the enterprise might be left incomplete, undertook the foundation in their lifetime. This was almost invariably the policy of those who lacked issue: principally the bishops, abbots, and clergy. One of the most elaborate

chantries was that established in 1332 by Henry Burghersh, bishop of Lincoln, in Lincoln Cathedral. The bishop's foundation provided for two chaplains to say Masses for the founder himself and his successors in the see, for Edward III and Queen Philippa, the queen mother, Isabella, and the living members of his immediate family and his benefactors.[12] After a decade the foundation was expanded by the bishop's brother, Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, to provide for five chaplains, not two, and to offer intercession for extra beneficiaries. The chantry was established in the north-east corner of the Angel Choir, a space formerly occupied by St Katherine's chapel. Two sumptuous tombs were built on its south flank, one for the bishop and the other for his father, Sir Robert, who had died in 1306; these were apparently in position by 1345. A mural tomb was later constructed on the north side for Sir Bartholomew the younger, who died in 1355. The decorative schemes on the two earlier tombs afford a clear illustration of the connection between physical commemoration and intercession. On the sides of the bishop's tomb five pairs of clerks are shown, seated as if participating in the Divine Office—a likely reference to perpetual prayers. Above them, the shields of arms were placed of the beneficiaries for whom the chaplains were to intercede—the king, his elder sons, various Burghersh kinsmen, and benefactors of the bishop. A similar heraldic scheme adorned Sir Robert's tomb. Decorative imagery on tombs and brasses associated with chantry foundations not uncommonly served in the office of a mnemonic prompt to the priest. The galleries of arms helped remind him of those for whom he was to pray, not all of them necessarily named in the foundation ordinance.

Examples of patrons establishing chantries and simultaneously commissioning tomb monuments are commonplace in medieval England. Sometimes the act of foundation was memorialized on a brass which the founder commissioned to celebrate the event. At Tormarton (Glos.) Sir John de la Rivière is shown holding aloft a massive representation of the chantry which he founded in Tormarton church in 1340. At Cobham (Kent) a brass of similar design commemorates John, Lord Cobham's, foundation of Cobham college in 1362. At Elsing (Norfolk) the kneeling figures, once in the east window, of Sir Hugh Hastings and his wife holding aloft a model church memorialize the couple's rebuilding of the church there.[13] In this last case, the witness of the window was reinforced by that of the brass laid to the founder by his executors on his death in 1347 (Fig. 51).

Sometimes it was the death of a spouse which prompted foundation of a chantry. In 1411 Thomas de Crewe, a Warwickshire lawyer, established a chantry in Wixford church following the death of his wife Juliana. Crewe's act of piety allowed him opportunity to express his indebtedness to his wife; a wealthy heiress,

[12] A. M. Morganstern, *Gothic Tombs of Kinship in France, the Low Countries and England* (Pennsylvania, 2000), 108–16, 186–91.

[13] Thomas Martin's drawing of the panel, which was at the foot of the central pane of the window, is illustrated in K. Mourin, *The Hastings Brass at Elsing, Norfolk* (Dereham: Norfolk Heraldic Monographs, 3, 2001), 46. The window had been destroyed by 1781. For a similar panel, once at East Winch (Norfolk), and perhaps depicting a Howard, see Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, 846.

she had brought him extensive lands in Shropshire and Warwickshire.[14] The chapel, on the south side of Wixford church, was lavishly fitted out.[15] The windows were filled with glass from the workshop of John Thornton of Coventry, with figures of the Apostles and coats of arms of Crewe's relatives and patrons in the east window. The brass commemorating Crewe and his wife, on a raised tomb in the centre, was one of exceptional grandeur. The two figures were shown near life-size under a double canopy, with shields at the top, and a marginal inscription surrounding the whole. On one of the shields the arms of Crewe's patron, the earl of Warwick, were shown. The Wixford chantry was planned on an exceptionally generous scale for one of the rank of esquire. Yet Crewe could afford it: being childless, he did not have to think about the needs of the next generation.

On a grander scale still than perpetual chantries were colleges—foundations of communities of priests rather than one or two. Collegiate churches provided the setting for some of the most ambitious commemorative schemes of the late Middle Ages.[16] At Cobham, where he had founded his college in 1362, John, Lord Cobham, commissioned no fewer than four brasses in one grand act of patronage, *c*.1367.[17] One of these was his own brass, showing him as a founder holding a representation of the college. The other three brasses commemorated kinsfolk whose souls were to be prayed for: his father, John the 2nd Lord, his cousin Sir Thomas Cobham of Beluncle, and his aunt, Margaret, the widow of Sir Matthew Fitzherbert. In the next forty years seven more brasses were to be laid, most of them in the founder's lifetime. Virtually all of the family's brasses were laid in two big rows in front of the high altar, the liturgical focus of the church (Fig. 23).

The establishment of Cobham, a foundation much influenced by the example of St George's, Windsor, set the pace for many other collegiate foundations in the late Middle Ages. One such was at Arundel (Sussex), where in 1387 Richard, earl of Arundel, transferred a chantry foundation from the castle to the parish church, which lay near by.[18] The earl rebuilt the church and transformed the chantry into a college, adding greatly to its endowment. The first burial to be made there was that of Earl Thomas (d. 1415), and his wife, the king of Portugal's daughter. Their tomb, appropriately magnificent, and adorned with no fewer than 28 weepers, was placed in the centre of the choir before the high altar. Many other burials followed. In the next generation a cadaver tomb was placed to the memory of Earl John, under an arch separating the choir from the Lady Chapel. Towards the end of the century and in the next, elaborate chantry chapels were built for William, the 11th earl,

[14] For Crewe's career, see *History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1386–1421*, ed. J. S. Roskell, L. Clarke, C. Rawcliffe (4 vols., Stroud, 1992), ii. 691–3.

[15] P. B. Chatwin, 'Wixford Church, Warwickshire: Its Brass and Painted Glass', *Trans. Birmingham Archaeological Soc.* 55 (1931), 48–56.

[16] J. M. Luxford, 'The Collegiate Church as Mausoleum', in C. Burgess and M. Heale (eds.), *The Late Medieval English College and its Context* (Woodbridge, 2008), 110–39.

[17] N. E. Saul, *Death, Art, and Memory in Medieval England: The Cobham Family and their Monuments* (Oxford, 2001), 90–6.

[18] Cook, *Medieval Chantries and Chantry Chapels*, 185–9.

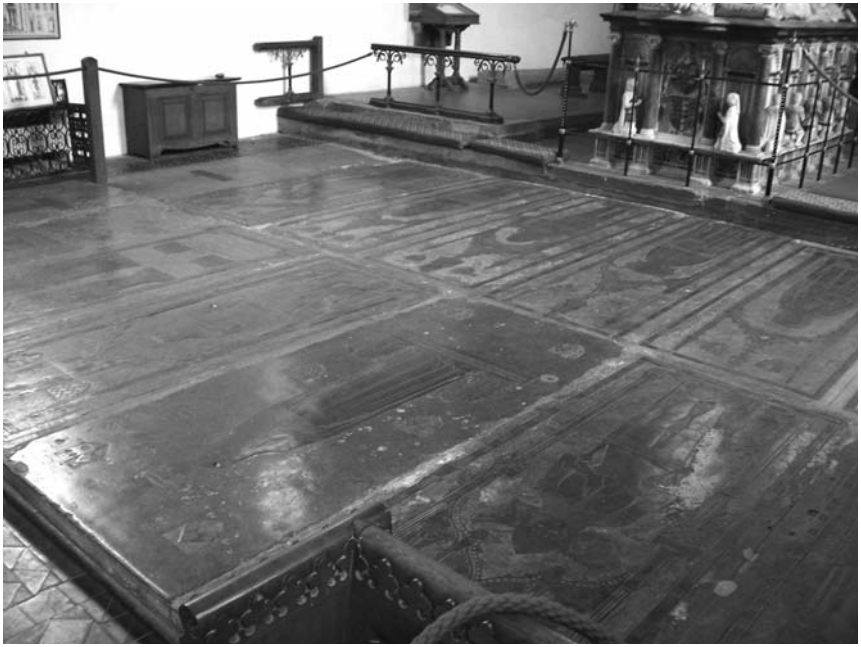

Figure 23. Cobham (Kent): the chancel

and Thomas, the 12th earl, to the south and north of the high altar respectively. These ornate stone cages provided space for the priest to say prayers next to the founder's tomb.

The colleges of Arundel and Cobham stood at the apex of a hierarchy of intercessory provision which stretched down to the more modest arrangements of middling and lesser proprietors. Perpetual chantries or colleges were foundations of exceptional character: only the rich could afford them. More common were chantries of short-term duration, typically one, two, or ten years. On the very eve of the Reformation one Robert Astbroke, a Buckinghamshire testator, instituted a chantry for ten years at the Jesus altar of High Wycombe church.[19] Among testators of lesser means, the most common requests were for the 'month's mind' and the 'year day' or obit. The month's mind was a re-enactment of the funeral a month after the testator's death, and the obit a similar ceremony after a year, payment for such services usually being made directly to the priest. Another request commonly made was for a trental, a run of thirty Masses on consecutive days. In all these celebrations the one unchanging feature was the focus on the deceased's place of burial. It was naturally expected for this reason that the burial place would be appropriately marked: in other words, some sort of monument would be set in

[19] Cook, *Medieval Chantries and Chantry Chapels*, 10.

place. Usually there was an approximate correspondence between the scale of the provision and the size of the monument. When William Snaith, a former sheriff of Kent, in 1409 instituted a chantry for five years in Addington church, he provided for a monument of some splendour, a canopied brass.[20] Fifty years later, when the humbler Thomas Charles of Hoo St Werburgh instituted six months' intercession at Hoo St Werburgh (Kent), he provided for a much smaller brass.[21] In each case, however, a brass memorial was provided. The presence of the effigy with its epitaph highlighted the close association between remembrance and prayer. Those who looked on were placed under a burden of obligation; they were reminded of the mutual dependence of the living and the dead. As the inscription on the memorial of John Bedel of Westminster aptly put it:

> Therefor of they cherite remembyr me,
> Even as in like case thou wouldst remembered be.[22]

The role of the monument as a focus for liturgical observances is well attested. Sometimes insights are afforded by the prescriptions laid down in wills and the founding ordinances of chantries. At Bury St Edmunds John Baret's chantry priest was to stand by his tomb (a cadaver), rehearsing Baret's name so that everyone present could respond 'God have mercy on his soul'.[23] At Lambourn (Berks.) the men of John Estbury's almshouse were to gather each day at his tomb to recite the Paternoster and Ave Maria, with the senior bedesman proclaiming that they were praying for John Estbury's soul and for the souls of his friends and ancestors.[24] At York Minster Dean Richard Andrew prescribed that, after singing the daily office in the choir, the vicars choral were to process to his tomb where, facing the crucifix, they were to sing the *De Profundis* with the accustomed intercessions.[25] The requirement for the *De Profundis* to be sung by the tomb was a common one in the commemorative arrangements of testators and founders of chantries. In Scotland Sir Patrick Barclay stipulated in an agreement of 1505 that his chaplain say the *De Profundis* weekly at his and his father's burial place in Grantuly church.[26] Testators were equally insistent that torches or lights be kept burning by their tombs. As early as the twelfth century, King Henry I had laid down that a torch be kept burning 'for ever' at the tomb of his first wife Matilda.[27] In 1428 the Kent knight Sir Thomas Culpeper gave instructions to the monks of Bayham Abbey,

[20] Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Arundel, ii, fo. 43^{v}.

[21] Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone, Rochester Consistory Court, DRb Pwr 2, fo. 112^{r}. Charles set aside the sum of 40*s*. for his brass, a modest amount.

[22] Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, 497.

[23] M. Aston, 'Death', in R. Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth-Century Attitudes: Perceptions of Society in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1994), 227. See also, below, 317–9.

[24] E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580* (New Haven and London, 1992), 328.

[25] S. Walker, 'Between Church and Crown: Master Richard Andrew, King's Clerk', *Speculum*, 74 (1999), 956–91 at 984.

[26] Edinburgh, National Archives of Scotland, Gordon Castle Muniments, GD44/2/4/1. I owe this reference to Dr Helen Brown.

[27] R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075–1225* (Oxford, 2000), 601.

where he requested burial, to set burning torches by his tomb on the occasion of the celebration of his obit each year.[28] On Bishop Godfrey de Lucy's tomb in Winchester Cathedral (*post*-1204) holes were actually incorporated in the lid for the array of tapers burned at the obit each year.

In a few churches, some of the furniture of liturgical observance has survived to this day. The most familiar example is the semicircular hearse still extant over the monument of Earl Richard Beauchamp at Warwick.[29] At West Tanfield (Yorks.) a rectangular frame, complete with prickets for candles, is to be seen around the tomb of Sir John Marmion.[30] Hearses like these were used in funeral ceremonies to support the pall, or cloth, which was draped over the coffin; and they were almost certainly pressed into service again at anniversaries. The metal grates which were often placed around major tombs, though partly symbolic, might also serve a liturgical purpose, as prickets were supported on the standards. Good examples of such grates are found around the tombs of the Black Prince at Canterbury and Bishop Beckington at Wells. On a few monuments the prickets alone have survived. On the monument of Geoffrey Kidwelly (d. 1483) at Little Wittenham (Berks.) the prickets are placed at the top of tall side pinnacles (Fig. 61). At Ewelme (Oxon.) there are iron eyes on each side of Alice de la Pole's tomb, to which hangings were probably attached (Fig. 70). It is not inconceivable that Duchess Alice's tomb was normally kept enclosed.[31]

COMMEMORATION AND SECULAR DISCOURSE

The establishment in the late Middle Ages of chantries and chantry chapels provided a powerful stimulus to the commissioning of funerary monuments. The monument with its life-like effigy, served as the focal point of the regular Masses celebrated for the deceased's soul. Cumulatively, these Masses contributed to the strengthening and profiting of Christian society as a whole.

The effect of chantry foundations, however, was not merely to stimulate institutionalized commemoration of the founder—one person; it was also to act as a stimulus to familial or ancestral commemoration. The reason for this was that in chantry ordinances instructions were commonly given not only for Masses for the founder's soul but also for the souls of his parents, ancestors, and others named by him.

Generally, it was parents and grandparents who were the beneficiaries of this ancestral remembrance. In 1420, when Sir Arnald Savage founded a chantry of five years' duration at Bobbing, he marked it by commissioning two brasses, one for himself and the other for his parents.[32] In 1449 William Whaplode's

[28] *Chichele's Register*, 382.
[29] J. Munby, 'Richard Beauchamp's Funeral Car', *JBAA* 155 (2002), 278–87.
[30] C. Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England, 1066–1550* (London, 1997), 47.
[31] J. A. A. Goodall, *God's House at Ewelme* (Aldershot, 2001), 176–7.
[32] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 206.

executors commissioned two sets of brasses, one for him, the other for his parents, to accompany his chantry foundation at Chalfont St Peter (Bucks.).[33] In 1376 Sir Marmaduke Constable, when establishing a chantry at Flamborough (Yorks.), provided for no fewer than three sets of brasses: the first to be placed over the tomb of his grandfather, the second over that of his mother, and the third over his own tomb 'when the time shall come'.[34] For the gentry, the honouring of ancestors was essential to the maintenance of their families' traditions and identity. Even when chantries were not involved, the memory of parents or other forebears might still be honoured. In the 1420s Richard Quartermain of Thame commissioned a brass to his parents and grandparents well before he embarked on the foundation of a chantry for the benefit of his whole family.[35] In 1379 the Kent knight Sir Walter Pavely made a testamentary request for brasses to be laid to his parents and his uncle in the Dominican church in London, and another brass to his grandparents at Boughton (Kent), all of them to be adorned with the arms of those they commemorated.[36]

The strong ancestral sense felt by the gentry also led to a desire on their part actually to be buried with parents and kinfolk. In 1440 Thomas Mohun recorded on his epitaph at Lanteglos by Fowey (Cornwall) that he and his father were buried together, although only one effigy was shown on top.[37] In 1414 Sir Ivo Fitzwaryn asked to be buried with his father William, Lord Fitzwaryn, at Wantage (Berks.), even though, as a younger son, he held no lands at Wantage, or even in the Wantage area.[38] In 1475 the Norfolk gentleman John Jernegan asked to be buried in Heringfleet church (Norfolk), 'because [his] ancestors were buried there'.[39] A couple of years earlier, at Quethiock (Cornwall) Roger Kingdon had celebrated on his epitaph that he was interred under the stone 'with his wife and all their ancestors'.[40] The gentry's strong ancestral sense could even bring them to have the bodies of forebears disinterred and moved near their own. In 1416 Hugh Mortimer, when arranging burial in Tewkesbury Abbey, simultaneously arranged for the bodies of his parents and brother to be reburied next to his and commemorated by their own memorial stones and epitaphs.[41] Sometimes, particularly in the sixteenth century, the insecurity of a new family could lead to the commissioning of retrospective effigies. In 1522 the parvenu courtier Sir William

[33] *History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, iv. 824; W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Buckinghamshire* (London, 1994), 29–30.

[34] M. G. A. Vale, *Piety, Charity and Literacy among the Yorkshire Gentry, 1370–1480* (York: Borthwick Papers, 50, 1976), 9.

[35] The brass is still extant. The text of the lost inscription is given in F. G. Lee, *History and Antiquities of the Church of Thame* (London, 1883), 91.

[36] *Testamenta Vetusta*, ed. N. H. Nicolas (2 vols., London, 1826), i. 106. The ancestral instinct, although most obviously felt by the gentry, was by no means confined to them. The wealthy chancery master William Prestwick commissioned a brass to his parents at Warbleton (Sussex), where he was himself buried (Fig. 14).

[37] W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cornwall* (London, 1997), 68.

[38] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 18.

[39] BL, Harley MS 10, fo. 316r.

[40] *Monumental Brasses of Cornwall*, 98.

[41] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 86.

Compton commissioned tomb effigies to his forebears at Compton Wynyates (War.) in an attempt to substantiate his gentlemanly claims.[42] A few years earlier, Thomas Stanley, earl of Derby, conscious of his family's recent accession to their title, commissioned an extensive series of monuments to his ancestors at Burscough Priory (Lancs.).[43]

The commissioning of monuments was therefore of some importance in the establishment of the gentry's sense of identity. What it did was provide the gentry with a way of giving physical expression to their ancestral worth—in other words, to their lineage. Lineage is perhaps best understood as the appreciation which a family had of itself in vertical terms. It conveyed the idea of the landowner as trustee or representative of a family line stretching back over the generations. Lineage carried at its heart the idea of a family's uninterrupted possession of a landed estate. As definitions of kin had gradually narrowed in the eleventh and twelfth centuries so, at the same time, the gentry's appreciation of lineage had increased. It was because of this sharpening of a sense of vertical identity that the gentry developed such an interest in tomb monuments and in the details of heraldry on them: monuments provided invaluable evidence of ancestry and pedigree. They gave visible expression to a family's connection with a manor, locality, or estate. They affirmed the historicity of a family's version of its past.

Yet the gentry's remembrance of lineage might well be selective, embroidered, and confused. Despite the formidable powers of memory which they could marshal on occasion, their recollection of descent, at least as later recorded by the heralds, might often be at variance with reality. If part of the problem was that memories became warped over time, the gentry did genuinely face difficulties in recalling the precise descent of their properties. Gentry estates were often unstable. They were subject to constant fragmentation and regrouping. Family histories were full of jumps, interruptions, and awkward transitions. Estates with a long independent existence might suddenly be carried to another family by marriage, while other estates which had grown rapidly through acquisition could lose their identity, be reshaped, and invested with a new identity. Family self-consciousness was subject to constant reinvention as a result of the accidents of biology and the buffetings of fortune. The lineage narratives preserved in cartularies often reflected the never-ending processes of dissolution and reshaping. Some of these narratives embodied a certain amount of 'Whig history' in the way in which they rewrote the past in the light of the present.[44] Every family sought to tackle the problem of territorial adaptation and adjustment in its own way. A widely employed strategy was to smooth over the breaks and discontinuities in the narratives of descent to create an impression of seamlessness in a family's history. In some cases families might take the opposite line, preferring to accept the inevitability of a break and come to terms with it. Whatever the family's strategy might be, however, the

[42] C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401–1499* (Cambridge, 1992), 240.

[43] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/14, fo. 148r.

[44] C. Carpenter, 'The Fifteenth-Century English Gentry and their Estates', in M. Jones (ed.), *Gentry and Lesser Nobility in Late Medieval Europe* (Gloucester, 1986), 55.

chances are that echoes would be found of it in the design and decoration of its monuments. The monuments which families commissioned, while primarily intended to elicit intercession, were inevitably influenced by the circumstances attending their creation. In a number of cases, they provide us with evidence of the concerns and preoccupations of those who commissioned them and of their response to those concerns. Some of the grandest funerary monuments of the period had their origins in family crises.

The phenomenon can best be illustrated by reference to the monuments of the Cobham family. The Cobhams were a widely ramified clan of lesser baronial standing in southern England. The parent branch of the family was based at Cobham itself, near Rochester, while cadet branches were seated at Randell in Shorne (Kent), Lingfield (Surrey), and elsewhere. Two of the family's branches have left us impressive series of monuments—the parent branch at Cobham itself and their collaterals at Lingfield. The very different preoccupations of the two families are reflected in the contrasting character of the monuments which they commissioned.

At Cobham the main problem confronting the family was the one dreaded by every gentry lineage—the threat of extinction in the male line. In the late fourteenth century the Cobhams' run of good luck in the production of male heirs finally ran out. John, the long-lived 3rd Lord, sired only a daughter—Joan—whom he arranged to be married to Sir John de la Pole of Chrishall (Essex).[45] Joan and her husband were to be no more fortunate biologically than her own parents had been: they produced only a daughter, another Joan, whom after her parents' deaths her grandfather brought up and invested with a Cobham identity. This Joan, the eventual family heiress, was, like the Wife of Bath, five times married. By her first and her two later marriages she had no issue. By her second and third marriages, however, she bore three sons, not one of whom survived to manhood. The brasses at Cobham attest the family's disappointment. The brasses of Sir Reginald Braybrooke and Sir Nicholas Hawberk, the second and third husbands, which Joan ordered in about 1409, are among the earliest to show children; the figures of the little boys are depicted nestling by their fathers' feet. When Joan herself died in 1434, she was shown on her brass as the fecund mother, the bearer of a healthy brood (Fig. 24). At her feet are two little groups of children, boys as well as girls, all looking up to their mother. In reality, however, only one child, a daughter, survived. Superficially, Joan's brass is a celebration of the Cobham lineage. Its dominant feature is the dazzling display of shields, three on each side, offering an epitome of the Cobhams' history. At a deeper level, however, the brass is a study in hopes disappointed. Joan's heir was yet another daughter, a child by Braybrooke: hence the description of her on the epitaph as Braybrooke's wife ('uxor domini Reginaldi Braybrook militis'). If the brass is at one level triumphalist in tone, a celebration of lineage, under the surface it is a study in the concealment of failure. After six generations the Cobham line had ended. No hint of that outcome is

[45] For the Cobhams of Cobham and their brasses, see Saul, *Death, Art and Memory*, chs. 2, 5.

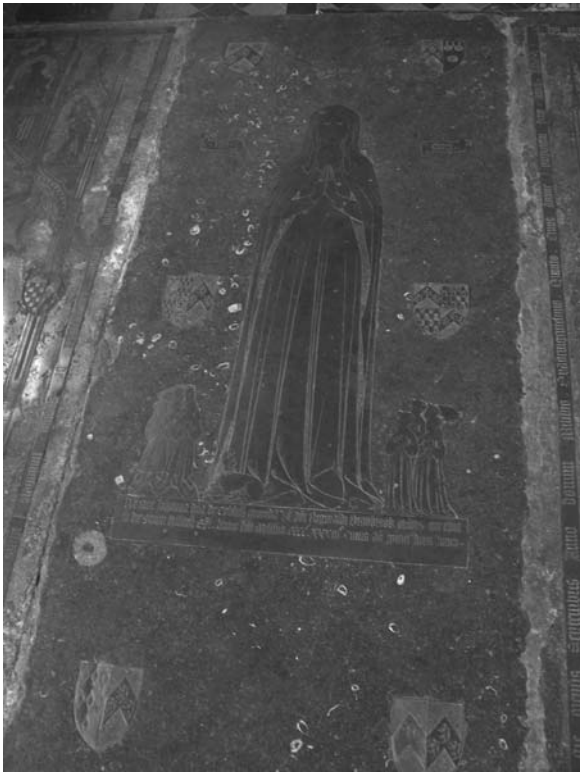

Figure 24. Cobham (Kent): Joan, Lady Cobham (d. 1434)

given on the brass: the emphasis is wholly on continuity between past, present, and future.

The preoccupations of the monuments of the Cobhams of Sterborough at Lingfield are very different. The Cobhams of Sterborough kept going in the male line for much longer than their collateral kin. What worried this branch of the family was not so much the threat of extinction as loss of status.[46] Reginald, 1st Lord Cobham (d. 1361), a successful captain under Edward III, had secured for his family a position in the parliamentary peerage (Fig. 52). His son and grandson, however, lacking both his talent and comparable opportunities to win fame, failed to maintain the family's standing and sank back into the gentry. The monuments at Lingfield are, accordingly, notable for their bombast—for their assertion of a social position which the family was in danger of losing. Heraldry figures prominently—far more prominently than on most of the brasses at Cobham. A square banner, the symbol of banneret status, is included on the

[46] For the Cobhams of Sterborough and their monuments, see ibid., chs. 6, 7.

brass of Eleanor, first wife of the third Reginald Cobham. There is a very obvious striving after commemorative splendour. The massive tomb of the third Reginald (d. 1446), placed centre-stage in the chancel, was grossly disproportionate to the commemorated's actual importance in the world. Decline in social status was compensated for by a self-consciously grandiose taste in funerary sculpture.

It would be wrong to suppose that all, or even the majority, of late medieval lay monuments were commissioned by families in crisis. Some of the finest assemblages of tombs were created by families with no obvious challenges to their position. The great series to the Pembridges and Vernons at Tong (Salop) falls into this category. So too do the only slightly less splendid series to the Strelleys at Strelley and the Harsicks at Southacre (Fig. 71). Tomb monuments were commissioned by the upper classes because funerary display was expected of families of exalted rank. Funerary display was one of the most effective ways in which a family could reaffirm and assert its membership of the elite. Sir Ralph Percy's richly carved tomb at Chillingham (Northumberland), a monument to a fairly inactive knight, was commissioned by his son not so much as a tribute to his father as an assertion of family power.[47] By the middle of the thirteenth century commemoration by a tomb had become part and parcel of the material culture of the gentry elite. In a big mausoleum church, the tombs tended mostly towards fairly standardized sequences, the later examples broadly following the earlier in design. None the less, it remains the case that in a significant number of instances funerary display was emphatically not routine; it was instrumentalist. Monuments were commissioned not just as expressions of a family tradition but to provide a way of adjusting to new circumstances. Their task was to conceal unwelcome truths, smooth over awkward transitions, proclaim grandeur amidst decay, and preserve a family's name where that name was disappearing.

It was precisely this sort of role which the later monuments at Cobham were called upon to perform: the main function of Joan, Lady Cobham's brass was to justify and manage the transition from one lineage to another. There was nothing untoward or unusual about this. Some of the grandest commemorative schemes of the late Middle Ages were commissioned by families which, like the Cobhams, faced extinction in the male line.

One very obvious example is found in the building activities and commemorative plans of the Lincolnshire magnate Ralph, Lord Cromwell (d. 1455). Cromwell, soldier, administrator, and sometime treasurer of Henry VI, was his family's last male representative. Unlike John, Lord Cobham, he lacked even a daughter or granddaughter to take over from him; his eventual co-heiresses were his two nieces.[48] Lacking as he did the normal responsibility of a landowner to preserve the inheritance for an heir of his body, he splashed out on a grand collegiate foundation at Tattershall. The centrepiece of the foundation was to be the magnificent brass

[47] D. Heslop and B. Harbottle, 'Chillingham Church, Northumberland: The South Chapel and the Grey Tomb', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th ser., 27 (1999), 123–34.

[48] Cromwell was predeceased both by a cousin, Robert Cromwell, and a nephew, Henry Stanhope.

of the founder himself in the chancel floor—although, in the event, this was laid only after his death.[49] Cromwell's strong ancestral instinct led him to commission a second brass, to his parents in the church at Lambley (Notts.), another of his properties. Cromwell's commitment to ancestral commemoration formed part of a much larger programme to perpetuate his family's name. In addition to establishing the college at Tattershall, he spent massive amounts on rebuilding his manor houses at Lambley, Collyweston (Northants), South Wingfield (Derby.), and Tattershall itself. For Cromwell, building and commemoration were undertaken with much the same end in view. Their purpose was to ensure that the Cromwell name and lineage would never be forgotten.

The remarkable series of tombs at Aldworth (Berks.) likewise owe their existence to a patron's desire to preserve the family name. The tombs, eight in number, all commemorate members of the de la Beche family, lords of the manor. Three of the tombs are set against the north wall, another three against the south wall, and the last two under the central arcade. The tombs were without exception the work of a talented Exeter-based team of sculptors, whose most distinguished production was the image screen across the west front of the cathedral. Although the figures are carefully differentiated in pose and detail, they share an interest in anatomical realism which suggests that they were the products, if not of a single commission, then of commissions closely related in date.[50] The spur to the commemorative scheme was almost certainly the failure of the de la Beche family in the male line in the mid-fourteenth century. In the space of little more than a decade a succession of brothers had died without surviving issue, leaving as last of the line a clerk, Edmund, archdeacon of Berkshire. In 1351 Edmund obtained a licence to found a chantry college at Aldworth for the benefit of his soul and those of his ancestors.[51] His ambition was to remain unfulfilled because he failed to secure possession of the advowson necessary to complete the endowment. None the less, his scheme of turning the church into a grand family mausoleum still went ahead. The effigies along the outer walls were probably the first to be commissioned, shortly before the Black Death, those in the centre following in the 1350s after production had picked up again in the workshops. The series of monuments bore witness both to Edmund's intense concern to perpetuate his family name and the family's close identity with the spot where their lordship had risen and fallen.

It is the role performed by the monument as a witness to lineage and status which accounts for so much in its character that would otherwise seem discordant. Memorials commissioned principally to elicit prayer were decked out with imagery

[49] For Cromwell's brass, see S. Badham, *The Monumental Brasses of the Collegiate Church of the Holy Trinity, Tattershall* (Tattershall, 2004), 6–10; for the dynastic heraldry in the windows, now mostly lost, see *Lincs. Church Notes*, 139–42.

[50] An examination of the stones used for the tombs by Tim Palmer and Philip Powell has identified two sources, one in the Burford area, and the other above the Vale of the White Horse; this seems to point to two campaigns.

[51] *CPR 1350–4*, 51. My remarks on Aldworth owe much to the talks by P. Coss, R. Emmerson, and B. and M. Gittos at the meeting of the Church Monuments Society at the church on 16 June 2007.

and decoration often more secular than religious in its content. Even the most modest church monuments carried coats of arms, livery badges, merchants' marks, and other signifiers of status. Armorial display, the privilege of the blue-blooded, was particularly important to the nobility and gentry. Coats of arms gave visible expression to the ties of kinship, attested linkage between the generations, and created a sense of family identity. It is hardly surprising that heraldry was one of the few attributes of their memorials for which testators made specific provision in their wills. The inclusion of children on monuments can be accounted for in much the same terms. The presence of issue below or alongside the main figures attested the continuance of the family line. Such was the importance attached to the children on the Catesby brasses at Ashby St Ledgers that on John Catesby's and Sir William Catesby's brasses they were individually named.[52] Each of the children was named too on the brass of Robert Eyre (d. 1459) at Hathersage (Derby.).

If the mixture of secular and religious imagery on medieval monuments may appear incongruous today, it is doubtful if it appeared so at the time. Contemporaries saw no sharp distinction between the secular and the religious spheres; the two merged and overlapped in their minds. Among the gentry, indeed, the imperatives of religious devotion and family interest were mutually reinforcing. The endowment of chantries and anniversaries, undertaken principally to secure personal salvation, was hardly less important in the preservation of family memory. The connection between lineage and prayer is dramatically illustrated by the monument attributed to Sir John de Heslerton and his wife at Lowthorpe (Yorks.). Heslerton had established a chantry college in Lowthorpe church in 1333, in addition to founding a series of smaller chantries there.[53] On his extraordinary monument the figures of him and his wife are shown covered by a blanket, on top of which is represented a stylized tree sprouting branches with the heads of their thirteen children. The Heslertons are portrayed in the midst of their own Biblical Tree of Jesse.[54] More conventionally, lineage was attested by the gradual build-up of monuments in a church over the generations. The tombs of the Pembridges and the Vernons jostling for position at Tong or of the Lords Willoughby at Spilsby (Lincs.) provide eloquent examples. The take-over of a church by a gentry family provided visible witness to the association between family and place, the essence of the gentry's sense of territoriality.

The overlap of lineage and intercession has a bearing on a second and related aspect, the relative precedence in the construction of medieval commemorative identity of individualist or collective expression. By the late Middle Ages there are signs that a growing emphasis was coming to be placed on the individual in the construction of monuments, particularly in epitaphs. At the same time, however,

[52] J. Bertram (ed.), *The Catesby Family and their Brasses at Ashby St Ledgers* (London, 2006), xvi–xvii, 52.

[53] *CPR 1330–4*, 413.

[54] This tomb has hitherto been interpreted as macabre in character. As S. Oosterwijk shows, 'Food for Worms—Food for Thought: The Appearance and Interpretation of the "Verminous" Cadaver in Britain and Europe', *CM* 20 (2005), 61–2, it is actually a version of a 'kinship' tomb.

there is also evidence of the continuing strength of the social or group identity. Is it possible to identify, however uncertainly, which of these two constructs took precedence?

When attention is focused on the body of motifs which lent meaning to a monument, there can be little doubt: it was the commemorated's identity as a member of a group which mattered. On a typical monument the commemorated was shown at the intersection of a number of overlapping and mutually reinforcing networks. The brass of Thomas Bush and his wife (d. 1526) at Northleach (Glos.) provides a good example (Fig. 25). In this complex composition Bush is depicted in a number of related contexts. At one level he is shown in the context of family, alongside his wife and children (the figures of the latter now lost). At the same time, he is shown in relation to other communities and groups to which he belonged. The merchants' marks together with the figures of sheep in the canopy locate him in the closely-knit Cotswold wool merchant community, while the arms of the Staple of Calais position him in the wider national mercantile network. Typically, on monuments to the gentry, rich armorial displays located the commemorated in a network of kinship ties linking together the families of the county elites. A particularly ambitious armorial on the tomb of Sir Thomas Arderne at Elford (Staffs.), *c.*1390, attests Sir Thomas's connections with some of the oldest and most distinguished families of the north Midlands. By the fourteenth century, the rise to popularity of the kinship tomb, on which family members were represented as 'weepers' around the sides, reinforced the image of the commemorated at the centre of a family group. At the same time, the commissioning by patrons of multiple monuments to parents and grandparents reinforced the dynastic character of commemoration. By the fifteenth century remarkably few commemorated—widows and clergy apart—were shown alone on their memorials. Most were shown in the company of spouses, children, and sometimes parents. The social dimension of the monument attested not only the strength of contemporary ties of kinship and association but also the highly communal nature of medieval religion. A dead person might expect to call on the aid of family, friends, business associates, guildsmen, and fellow parishioners in the battle to ease the purgatorial pains of his soul.[55]

The suggestion has recently been made that there was a further dimension to the social, or at least secular, role of the monument. According to J. Luxford, one of the functions of monuments was to serve as sources of legal evidence: in other words, to furnish 'proof'.[56] Monuments, it is argued, could be called upon to support a family's claim to possession of an estate, a person's right to a coat of arms, or even the claim of an ancient church to legitimacy. The argument is an attractive one. On one celebrated occasion a memorial brass was in fact cited in a case—the dispute in the Court of Chivalry between Lord Grey and Sir Edward Hastings over

[55] For further discussion of the social construction of the deceased on monuments, see below, 355–8.

[56] J. M. Luxford, 'The Tomb as Proof in Medieval England: A New Dimension', *Speculum* forthcoming.

Figure 25. Northleach (Glos.): Thomas Bush and his wife (d. 1526). Rubbing of brass

the right to bear the arms *or with a maunche gules*;[57] in 1408, at one stage in the proceedings, the court adjourned to Elsing vicarage at Hastings's request to inspect the brass of his ancestor, Sir Hugh, in the church near by (Fig. 51). On a much later occasion the evidence of a tomb inscription was invoked in a case at common law, in this instance to reinstate the provisions of a violated will. This was in 1635 in a dispute over the land called 'Levetts' in Brightling (Sussex), which John Bates, according to the will recorded on his epitaph, left to Brightling church. By the seventeenth century the estate had passed into other hands and when the case was brought into Chancery, the epitaph was cited, and the land restored.[58]

For all the persuasiveness of Luxford's argument, however, it is doubtful if it can be accepted in exactly the form in which it stands. The number of monuments cited as evidence in litigation is so few that it is unlikely that considerations of 'proof' constituted a significant factor in patronage. A more plausible argument might be that monuments were sometimes commissioned with a view to ensuring performance of obligation. A surprisingly large number of brasses and slabs record the foundation of a chantry or obit. A reused brass at Shipton-under-Wychwood (Oxon.) records the foundation in 1494 of an obit to be celebrated by the fraternity of Our Lady at Aylesbury (Bucks.).[59] At Rothley (Leics.) the place of the inscription on Bartholomew Kingston's slab of 1486 is entirely taken up by an extract from the deceased's will recording the establishment of an obit in the church.[60] The reason for having these arrangements publicly recorded was to ensure that they were properly honoured. Paradoxically, one of the functions of monuments may have been to render litigation unnecessary. It was with this end in view that Thomas Lexham, a canon of Hereford, in 1382 made an unconventional request in his will: namely that the choristers of the cathedral should recite their obits standing on his memorial stone; the reason, he said, was that he would be listening to ensure that they did their job properly.[61]

THE LATE MEDIEVAL DISCOURSE OF INTERCESSION

By the late Middle Ages monuments formed part of a rich, all-embracing, discourse of intercession in churches. Demands for prayer from those fearful for their souls were communicated in every medium, textual, physical, and vocal. The message was articulated most forcefully in donor panels in stained glass windows. Monuments and windows went together, the two drawing on the same repertory of

[57] A. R. Wagner, 'A Fifteenth-Century Description of the Brass of Sir Hugh Hastings at Elsing, Norfolk', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 19 (1939), 428.

[58] C. E. D. Davidson-Houston, 'Sussex Monumental Brasses', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 76 (1935), 91–3.

[59] R. Rex, 'Monumental Brasses and the Reformation', *TMBS* 14 (1990), 378.

[60] F. Greenhill, *The Incised Slabs of Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicester, 1958), 151–2 and pl. XXII.

[61] Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Courtenay, fos. 203^{v}–204^{r}. Lexham was their former teacher.

motifs—kneeling figures of donors, prayer scrolls, and displays of family heraldry. If a tomb or brass were placed to a person's memory on a floor, there would be a strong likelihood of a donor panel in a window near by. At Thurcaston (Leics.) the brass of the wealthy rector John Mersdon (d. 1426) (Fig. 46) was overlooked by the east window, which he gave, his kneeling figure, still extant, at the foot of the central light. At neighbouring Wanlip Sir Thomas Walsh (d. 1393) and his wife were shown with their children in the east window of the chancel and again, unaccompanied, as standing figures on a floor brass.[62] At Heythrop (Oxon.) the kneeling figures of John Ashfield (d. 1521) and his wife were shown in a window in the chancel, overlooking their brass effigies on their tomb below (both extant). Before the massive iconoclastic assault on stained glass in the seventeenth century, windows with donor figures were to be found in almost every church in England. Sketches of such windows fill the seventeenth-century manuscript notebooks of Nicholas Charles, William Burton, Randle Holme and other heralds and antiquaries.[63]

The intercessory discourse, however, was not confined to stained glass; it spread right across the church. At Wrangle (Lincs.) requests for intercession appeared on monumental inscriptions, on the font cover, even on the roof beams.[64] At Horsham St Faith (Norfolk) intercessory texts featured on the rood screen, while a donor figure was shown on the side of the pulpit. Screens, windows, and pulpits adorned with donor images and intercessory text were a characteristic of late medieval East Anglian churches.[65] At Isleham (Cambs.) appeals for prayers for John and Ellen Bernard were inscribed on a bell, which they gave, as well as on their brasses in the chancel. At Long Melford (Suffolk) a series of inscriptions appealing for prayers for the Cloptons and other gentry were incorporated into the external parapet of the church, most of those named being commemorated by tombs and brasses inside.[66] At All Saints, Bristol, the intercessory discourse extended even to the church moveables: Alice Chester bequeathed to the church a hearse-cloth for use at funerals bearing the inscription 'Orate pro animabus Henrici Chester et Aliciae uxoris eius'.[67]

[62] The window, which was dated 1393 and is now lost, is recorded by William Burton: BL, Egerton MS 3510, fo. 39^{r}. The brass, which recorded Lady Walsh's responsibility for rebuilding the church, is illustrated in J. A. and L. A. B. Waller, *A Series of Monumental Brasses from the 13th to the 16th Century* (repr. London, 1975), 25.

[63] William Burton's notes cover the east Midlands and parts of Norfolk (BL, Egerton MS 3510); there are sketches of windows with donors at Mancetter, Wolvey, Hillmorton, Coleshill (all War.), Lindley, Narborough, Castle Donington, and Whitwick (all Leics.), Leigh and Bishbury (Staffs.), and Aldborough (Norfolk). Randle Holme's notes (BL, Harley MS 2151), relating to Cheshire, have drawings of windows with donor figures at Wilmslow, Brereton, Gawsworth, and elsewhere. Nicholas Charles's notes (with drawings by William Smith) cover London and the southern counties (BL, Lansdowne MS 874). Good examples of windows from Kent churches are in John Philipot's notes (BL, Egerton MS 3310A, printed in 'A Book of Church Notes by John Philipot, Somerset Herald', ed. C. R. Councer in *A Seventeenth Century Miscellany* (Kent Records, 17, 1960)).

[64] *Lincs. Church Notes*, 160–1.

[65] N. Pevsner, *North-East Norfolk and Norwich* (Harmondsworth, 1962), 172; idem, *North-West and South Norfolk* (Harmondsworth, 1962), pl. 31b.

[66] N. Pevsner, *Suffolk* (Harmondsworth, 2nd edn., 1974), 344–5, gives many of the texts. There are also donor figures in the windows.

[67] Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 331.

In some cases, the intercessory discourse was spread across not one church but several. In the 1460s Richard Quartermain of Oxfordshire established a chantry in his parish church at Thame (Oxon.), while also paying for glazing schemes at Thame itself, Great Haseley, and Rycote chapel near his house at North Marston. In the windows of all three buildings there were donor figures of Quartermain and his wife surrounded by appropriate heraldry.[68] In some of the grander commemorative schemes attempts were made to weld together the various elements in the discourse. At St Mary's, Warwick, Richard Beauchamp's tomb effigy was made the focal point of a grand iconographic scheme which embraced the whole chapel (Fig. 21). At Asthall (Oxon.) Lady Cornwall's figure was made to gaze up at a devotional image in the stained glass window above. On monuments at Ledbury, Hereford, and Pucklechurch the canopy over the figure was extended to include an open arcade in front of the window, allowing the window imagery to be included in the scheme. Exceptionally, at Morley (Derbyshire) an obit reminder brass in the chancel was linked to a list of obits in a family book of hours. The brass, commissioned by John Stathum, lord of the manor, *c*.1450, appealed for prayers for his deceased kin, 'Rafe, Godith, Thomas, Elizabeth, Cecill and John', in accordance with instructions given, so he said, in 'divers bokis'. Since the names of Rafe and the others are all listed in the family's book of hours, it is evident that this must be one of the 'divers bokis' to which the brass referred.[69]

Jonathan Finch has suggested that tomb monuments in churches were seen by contemporaries as performing a more social role than fittings such as screens and windows because they affirmed status as well as appealed for prayer.[70] There may be some truth in the suggestion; monuments were distinguished from other examples of textual discourse in churches by their unique duality of function. None the less, it would be wrong to underestimate the importance which contemporaries attached to stimulating intercession for the soul. This was the spur to so much of the massive investment in the fabric and fittings of late medieval parish churches.

It needs to be remembered, as well, that the employment of a common discourse across the church was wholly consistent with the general aesthetic of English late medieval 'Perpendicular' architecture. A characteristic of 'Perpendicular' was the ambition to integrate the various parts of the church fabric. A Perpendicular church, unlike one in the 'Decorated' idiom, was meant to be viewed as a whole. Windows, roofs, screens, and all the other fittings were designed in such a way as to be read together. Since those who contributed to the cost of these fabrics

[68] For Quartermain's career, and for the glazing at Rycote and Great Haseley, see J. T. Driver, 'Richard Quatermayns: A Fifteenth-Century Squire and Knight of the Shire for Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*, 51 (1986), 87–103; at Rycote, Quartemain and his wife were shown holding aloft a model church: BL, Egerton MS 3510, fo. 102^{r}. For the Quartermain chantry at Thame, see Lee, *History and Antiquities of the Church of Thame*, 93.

[69] The book of hours is Derbyshire Record Office, D5649. The connection with the brass was noticed by A. R. Dufty, 'The Stathum Book of Hours: An Existing MS Mentioned on a 15th-Century Brass', *Archaeological Jnl.* 106 (1949), 83–90. The link is an instance of what may have been a wider phenomenon. The Office of the Dead was a standard feature of Books of Hours.

[70] J. Finch, *Church Monuments in Norfolk before 1850: An Archaeology of Commemoration* (British Archaeological Reports British Series, 317, 2000), 70.

sought commemoration through intercession, churches became in effect 'theatres of memory'. In pre-Reformation England the living, the dead, and the as yet unborn were all linked in a relationship of mutual dependence. It is no surprise to find that monuments, besides accommodating themselves aesthetically to their physical surroundings, fitted functionally into the elaborate apparatus of intercession which flourished in late medieval England.

7

Composition and Design

VERTICAL OR HORIZONTAL?

Funerary monuments were conceived as producers of meaning—indeed, of multiple meanings. On even the simplest memorial a variety of motifs, visual and textual, was deployed to convey a message to the viewer and to manipulate his or her response. In the repertory of visual motifs, architectural composition—design, that is—held a position of the highest importance. The main influence on design was the monument's function, its dual role as a spur to intercession and a witness to social status.

Monuments varied greatly in size and complexity. In the case of the larger compositions the principal components could typically consist of the effigy of the deceased, the high chest on which it was laid, and a canopy or other architectural surrounds. Where the patron made the most lavish commemorative provision, the monument could form the centrepiece of a larger ensemble comprising a chantry chapel, sculpted reredos, and paintings. Monuments to lesser patrons were much simpler. In the fifteenth century many consisted of no more than a brass effigy and inscription let into the floor; in some cases a short two-line inscription might be all. But whether the monument was large or small, grand or simple, it was designed with the needs of an audience in mind. Its design and composition played a vital role in communicating its message to the onlooker.

From the late thirteenth century most larger English monuments incorporated in their composition an effigy of the deceased. Until the mid-1400s, when kneeling figures appeared, these invariably took the form of a recumbent effigy of the deceased of conventional likeness.[1] The source of the effigial form was to be found in the statuary which adorned major church façades. The recumbent figure was simply the upright figure of the west front laid flat. In the process of its move from one setting to another, however, an aesthetic ambiguity arose. The figure was shown on the tomb active and erect as if alive; yet by virtue of being placed horizontally it was apparently represented dead. This tension between vertical and horizontal was first manifested in the North African mosaic slabs

[1] It goes without saying that medieval effigies were not portraits. The earliest certain English attempt at portraiture is made on the tomb of King Richard II in Westminster Abbey, a monument commissioned in the king's lifetime, and by a patron unusually interested in his self-image (Fig. 18). A slightly earlier striving after likeness is found on the tomb of Philippa of Hainault (d. 1369), by a foreign craftsman, also in the Abbey.

of late Antiquity.[2] These slabs were always laid horizontally; yet the men and women shown on them were conceived, in the Classical tradition, as standing. By the late Middle Ages, the tension between vertical and horizontal ate away at the artistic integrity of all effigial sculpture. The presence of cushions and footrests implied that the figures were lying down, while the fall of the drapery suggested that they were standing up. In English sculpture the ambiguity was felt more painfully than elsewhere in Europe. In much of southern Europe there was a broad resolution in favour of recumbency: typically, the figures were shown relaxed or immobile, their eyes often closed; there is no doubt that they are at rest. In England, however, as in Germany, the emphasis on realism remained to the fore. The eyes of the figures were always open; on fourteenth-century knightly effigies the legs were typically shown crossed in 'the lively martial attitude'; on monuments to husbands and wives the couple were sometimes shown holding hands. The horizontal position sat ill with all the attributes of realism.

Is it possible to say whether English effigies should be conceived as placed vertically or horizontally? What understanding did the sculptors themselves have of the figures which they were creating? There are reasonable grounds for believing that the sculptors' intention was to represent the human figure alive and erect.[3] In all likelihood, the features associated with recumbency arose from the need to improvise. The inclusion of the cushion under the head can easily be explained. The heads of statues placed vertically on façades were either erect or bore a slight forward tilt. When such a figure was laid horizontally, however, the head would be unsupported and in danger of breaking off. The solution was to provide a support in the shape of a cushion. A similar piece of improvisation was employed in the case of the feet. The sculptors were well aware that a figure had to stand on some form of prop; the feet could not be left dangling. A grassy mound offered the most logical solution; and accordingly mounds were often employed on brasses. The drawback to mounds, however, was that visually they were uninspiring. The placing of a beast, such as a lion, under the feet would be far more eye-catching. The beast motif, first introduced to solve a simple practical difficulty, soon developed an artistic life of its own.[4]

There remains the problem of realism. How is the lively character of English effigies, so different from their French equivalents, to be explained? The most likely explanation is that with the passage of time the original character of the effigy was lost sight of. In its original form the effigy stood as an icon of the risen body of the redeemed Christian. It was not a representation of a corpse, a body awaiting burial; it was a portrait of an idealized figure in the prime of life. The implication of this

[2] E. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture: Its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini* (London and New York, 1964), 50–1. [3] J. E. Powell, 'Vertical-Horizontal?', *Costume*, 13 (1979), 1–7.

[4] One monument with a clear emphasis on the vertical was that of Adam Peshale at Weston (Salop), which showed him with one hand at his side and the other on his sword hilt. The monument, probably an incised slab, is now lost, but is known from the notes of Randle Holme: BL, Harleian MS 2129, fo. 195^{r}.

conception was that the Day of Judgement had already come: hence the serene quality of the figure, the dignity and nobility with which it was invested. As the Middle Ages wore on, however, this early conception of the effigy was lost sight of; the effigy's religious meaning was forgotten. The sculptors' quest for realism led them to lay all possible emphasis on the attributes of authenticity. The accurate representation of detail, in particular of the trappings of status, became an end in itself. The pressure for this mode of representation seems to have come from the patrons. It is easy to represent what happened to commemorative sculpture in the fifteenth century in terms of a decline in artistic skill; indeed, as output from the workshops increased, the quality of carving or engraving does appear to have coarsened. Yet, to judge from the evidence of contracts, there can be little doubt that the main reason for the confusion lay in the demands made by patrons. On Richard Willoughby's brass at Wollaton it was the patron who insisted on inclusion of the gigantic whelk shell beneath his feet (Fig. 16).[5] If the tension between vertical and horizontal in English effigial sculpture became more acute in the Middle Ages, it was due in part to clients' insistence on the inclusion of trappings which denoted status but which detracted from the artistic integrity of the effigy. The sculptor was not an autonomous agent.

ONE FIGURE OR TWO?

In the early days of effigial representation the figure was shown on the tomb alone. Only the deceased was represented; no thought was given to showing his spouse or family. In the case of priests who were celibate, this was only to be expected. Other than perhaps with parents or siblings, there were no others with whom the commemorated could be represented. In the case of members of the laity, however, the matter was less clear-cut. The possible inclusion of the spouse—or spouses—and children could be considered, investing the tomb with a familial dimension. In the first century or so of effigial representation members of the laity were invariably shown unaccompanied, even when there was a spouse who could have been included. King John, for example, was shown unaccompanied on his tomb in Worcester Cathedral (*c*.1232). Even when husbands and wives had died within a short time of one another, they were commemorated by separate monuments.

Gradually, however, the approach to commemoration changed. A new conception arose of the monument as commemorating more than one person. By the second quarter of the fourteenth century joint monuments were being commissioned to married couples, showing them lying side by side, even where one of the partners was still alive. The shift in commemorative approach was the outcome of a process of experiment and invention. The first step was to bring the slabs or recesses holding separate effigies closer together. At Wickhampton (Norfolk) a couple of richly adorned recesses containing the effigies of Sir William Gerberge

[5] Nottingham University Library, Middleton Collection, Mi5/168/34.

and his wife were placed alongside each other on the north side of the chancel. At Threekingham (Lincs.) the effigies of Sir Lambert de Threekingham and his wife, probably the products of separate commissions, were placed next to each other to create the impression of a double tomb. On a number of small-scale commissions of the late thirteenth century husbands and wives had actually been shown together. The most remarkable of these is the low-relief slab at Winterbourne Bassett (Wilts.) of an unidentified couple shown holding hands. It was only in the fourteenth century, however, that on large compositions married couples were shown as couples. An excellent early example is provided by the freestone tomb of Sir John de Metham and his wife Sybil, *c*.1312, at Howden Minster (Yorks.).[6] One of the most attractive examples is the superb brass of Sir John de Creke and his wife, *c*.1340, at Westley Waterless (Cambs.) (Fig. 26). After the Black Death

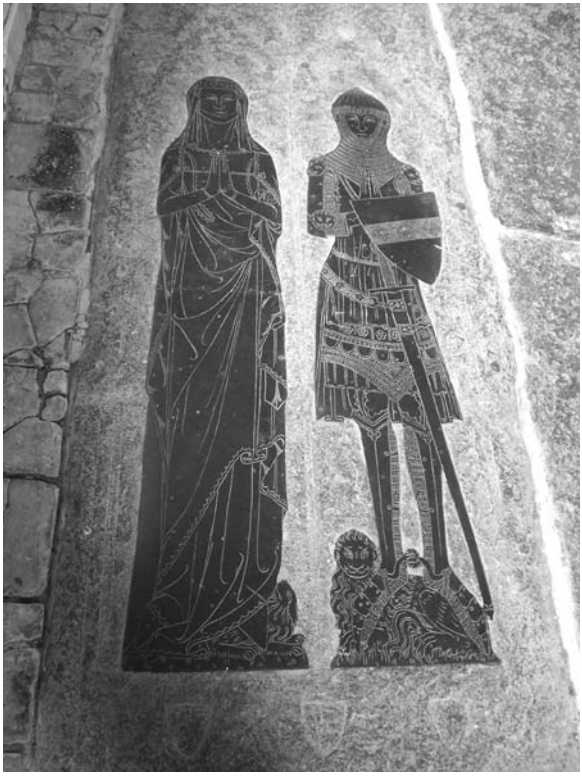

Figure 26. Westley Waterless (Cambs.): Sir John de Creke and his wife, *c*.1340

[6] S. Badham, B. Gittos, M. Gittos, 'The Fourteenth-Century Monuments in the Saltmarshe Chapel at Howden, Yorkshire: Their History and Context', *Yorkshire Archaeological Jnl.* 68 (1996), 113–23.

monuments of this type became more common. In the usual arrangement the male figure was placed on the right (dexter) and the female on the left (sinister) side. This accorded with a long tradition in Christian imagery which accorded primacy to the position on the right.[7]

The creation of joint monuments involved a considerable rethinking of what the monument represented. Hitherto, the ensemble of effigy and slab had been seen in straightforward terms as a memorial to a deceased person. In physical terms, it took the place of that person; it preserved his or her memory in the community. On joint memorials, however, one of the persons represented might still be alive. If the memorial was commissioned by the surviving partner on the death of the other, one dead person and one living would be commemorated. The appearance of joint memorials thus involved a blurring of the distinction between life and death. While the dead person was made to look alive, the living person was made to look dead. The moment of death had disappeared as a defined point in time.

The most likely explanation for the appearance of joint monuments is to be found in the rapid spread of chantry provision in this period. Typically, in chantry foundation prayers were sought not only for the founder but also for those named by him, among whom might be numbered his or her spouse and close kin. In the late Middle Ages there was a close association between the commissioning of monuments and the establishment of chantries. Where the chantry took the form of a chapel attached to a church, the tomb was typically the focal point of attention within. Therefore, if prayers were sought not only for the founder but also for the spouse, it was only natural for the spouse to be shown on the tomb too. An additional attraction of the double monument was the opportunity which it allowed for the display of family and dynastic pride: marriage alliances could be celebrated through the marshalling of coats of arms on the sides. Considerations of this sort, however, were almost certainly secondary to the key aim of securing prayer for both partners. It was the need to elicit intercession for two people which was the main factor in bringing about the joint monument.

FAMILY MONUMENTS

The appearance of the joint, or double, monument proved the first stage in a larger process which saw the monument take on more of a social and dynastic character. In the fourteenth century the ranks of those represented were extended further to include children. Monuments, as a result, now spanned the generations; they took on something of a prospective character. Instead of looking solely to the past, as they had, they looked to the future as well.

Children were first included on monuments in the early fourteenth century. Initially, there was no uniformity in the way in which they were represented.

[7] C. Schleif, 'Men on the Right—Women on the Left: (A)symmetrical Spaces and Gendered Places', in V. C. Raguin and S. Stanbury (eds.), *Women's Space: Patronage, Place and Gender in the Medieval Church* (New York, 2005), 207–47.

This was because sculptors were lacking any established or authoritative models in which to seek ideas. Various possibilities were tried in the search for an aesthetically pleasing solution.[8] On some monuments the child was represented below or alongside the figure of his mother. At Scarcliffe (Derby.) a boy identified on a scroll as John is shown clasped in the arms of his mother Constancia, his right hand touching the mother's cheek. At Bodenham (Heref.) the figure of a little boy is shown pressed against his mother's side, his mother's arm resting on his shoulder (Fig. 27). On a third example, at Howell (Lincs.), a child is shown in a small trefoil medallion below a larger trefoil containing the half-effigy of his

Figure 27. Bodenham (Heref.): a lady and child, early fourteenth century

[8] For this subject, see S. Oosterwijk, '"A Swithe Feire Grave": The Appearance of Children on Medieval Tomb Monuments', in R. Eales and S. Tyas (eds.), *Family and Dynasty in Late Medieval England* (Donington, 2003), 172–92.

mother. Quite possibly, all three of these monuments commemorated mothers who died in childbirth. In the absence of any biographical details relating to the commemorated, however, it is difficult to be certain of the meaning of their iconography. We cannot even be certain whom any of these monuments commemorates, though the Scarcliffe monument may commemorate a member of the Freschville family.

The joint monument, showing mother and child, provided just one possible model of representation. In another idea explored, children or offspring were shown on memorials of their own.[9] Around 1370 William of Hatfield, a son of Edward III who had died in 1337, was commemorated by a retrospective effigy in York Minster. At Sherborne St John (Hants), Raulyn Brocas and his sister were shown as small half-figures on a brass of *c*.1385. In 1414 Philippa, daughter of Nicholas Carew, was shown alongside the half-effigies of her seven brothers and six sisters, all of whom were named. Offspring continued to be represented alone on brasses well into the fifteenth century. Examples are provided by the diminutive figures at Headbourne Worthy (Hants) and Wraysbury (Bucks.).[10] The number of such memorials, however, declined with time. Where children were commemorated alone, it was more usually, as at West Lavington (Wilts.), by brief inscriptions. A number of diminutive effigies which have the appearance of children's memorials are not memorials to children at all: they actually mark heart burials.

The makings of a more satisfactory solution to the problem of the representation of offspring were offered in the mid-fourteenth century by the appearance of the so-called lineage tomb. The central feature of these tombs was the placing of miniature figures of members of the deceased's family around the sides of the chest as 'weepers'.[11] In many cases, a link is to be observed between the tomb and a chantry foundation, the figures on the tomb representing the family members for whom the chantry priests were to intercede.[12] In the case of Elizabeth, Lady Montagu's tomb in St Frideswide's, Oxford (now Christ Church Cathedral), the rows of figures are clearly intended to represent Elizabeth's ten children, for whose well-being she made intercessory provision in 1348. The model of the lineage monument provided a convenient solution to the problem of how and in what position children should be represented in funerary sculpture. On high-status monuments with chests the figures of children, or the childrens' coats of arms, could be placed in niches round the sides. On two-dimensional memorials—brasses and incised slabs—the three-dimensional model could be adapted by the removal of the childrens' figures to just by, or just below, their parents' feet. On Lady Cobham's brass at Cobham (1434) the children are placed right by the side of their mother's feet (Fig. 24). On that of Thomas Stokes at Ashby St Ledgers, 1416, they are

[9] The term offspring, rather than children, is used in this paragraph to allow for the fact that some of those represented may have lived to early adulthood.

[10] J. Page-Phillips, *Children on Brasses* (London, 1970), figs. 16, 17, 18.

[11] See below, 166–8.

[12] A. M. Morganstern, 'The Tomb as Prompter for the Chantry: Four Examples from Late Medieval England', in E. Valdez del Alamo and C. S. Prendergast (eds.), *Memory and the Medieval Tomb* (Aldershot, 2000), 82–3.

placed just below the parents, the pattern which was to become standard later. By the mid-fifteenth century the inclusion of children was to become commonplace on memorials—particularly brasses and incised slabs—to the laity.

The representation of children on monuments has generated considerable debate in the context of medieval understandings of childhood. It is accordingly worth pondering the broader significance of this generational extension of the ranks of the commemorated. Is a change to be detected in parental attitudes to children? May the inclusion of children on tombs be taken as indicative of growing parental affection for their young? Or is what we are seeing nothing more than a strengthening of traditional dynasticism? Were children included less for their own sake than for what they represented—the continuance of the family line?

Strangely, on monuments there is little sign of an appreciation of childhood as a stage in its own right. Medieval thinkers had a strong sense of personal development as proceeding through stages, an idea articulated in the Ages of Man topos. For children the first stage was that of infancy—*infantia*—which went up to 7; then there was *pueritia*, from 7 to 14, and finally *adolescentia*, from 14 on. Despite this conceptualization of early development, however, no attempt was made to produce any distinctive modes of representation for children. Children were invariably shown on memorials as miniature adults, dressed in full adult attire. Nor is there much sign of interest being shown in capturing individual identity. On the majority of brasses children were simply represented as anonymous groups on plates mass-produced by the workshops. Such impersonal memorialization is hardly suggestive of deep parental attachment to children. It suggests, rather, that the main purpose of including children was to make a dynastic statement. If this was the case, and it may well have been, it is easy to understand why it should have been so. In an age of high infant mortality parents' chief concern was simply to ensure the survival of their children to adulthood. Parents may well have recoiled from investing too much emotional capital in affection for their offspring lest hope all too suddenly turn to despair.

There are thus strong arguments for supposing that the appearance of children on monuments had little to do with a growth of parental sentiment. Yet there are also arguments to be set on the other side. On at least some monuments the inclusion of children can be shown to have originated in genuine feelings of loss. It is clear that the inclusion of the figures of the boys on the brasses of Joan, Lady Cobham's two husbands at Cobham stemmed from the genuine grief which their mother, who commissioned the brasses, felt at their loss. It was relatively unusual at this time for children to be represented on high-status memorials. The fact that they are shown on these brasses must have been the product of a very conscious decision by Lady Cobham. The boys are named—Reginald and Robert on Sir Reginald Braybrooke's brass, and John on Sir Nicholas Hawberk's. These are the sons on whom Joan and her two husbands had placed their hopes for the continuance of the Cobham line.[13] The boys, however, were either stillborn or died very young;

[13] See above, 131.

Lady Cobham was to bear no son who survived her. In these two very elaborate and deeply expressive memorials can be felt the sense of loss of the bereaved parent. Whatever meaning the presence of children on monuments was to carry later, it need not be assumed that it was the same earlier. By the mid-fifteenth century the inclusion of children on brasses had become conventional; it was the essential witness to dynastic continuity. Half a century, or a century, before the position was very different. It was the failure of the family line, and not its continuance, which proved the spur to childrens' representation.

THE KNEELING FIGURE

Towards the end of the Middle Ages a challenge was mounted to the authority of the recumbent figure by the introduction of figures showing the commemorated kneeling at prayer. This form of representation, employed initially on brasses, was to lead to a major change in the locational conception of the monument. The recumbent effigy had owed its long ascendancy to the convenience of its match to the shape of the coffin or tombstone. The kneeling figure, by virtue of being as wide as it was tall, did not fit this traditional position so well. Its natural home was in a vertical position on the wall: which is where by the fifteenth century it had typically come to rest. Once the logic of the case for placing kneeling figures in mural positions was accepted, the way was opened to an entirely new genre of monument—the wall monument placed roughly at eye height. This new type of monument was to be one of the most popular of all in the early modern period.

The origins of the kneeling funerary effigy are to be found in the kneeling donor figures which were so prominent a feature of stained glass art in this period. By as early as the thirteenth century it had become common for donors of windows to have their figures shown kneeling at prayer near the foot of the main lights. A whole series of such figures is found in the early fourteenth-century windows of the nave of York Minster. In an age when it was common for craftsmen to share templates and designs, it was only natural for the makers of effigies and brasses to draw on motifs developed by their peers in the glazing trade.

The first example of a kneeling figure in a funerary context may be considered one of the most eye-catching—the figure of Edward, Lord Despenser (d. 1375) on the roof of his chantry chapel in Tewkesbury Abbey. This remarkable creation, an example of the devotional image known as the *priant*, was without precedent in England, and apparently without sequel. A possible source for the design may have been the kneeling figures of Edward III and the royal family in the wall paintings of St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster.[14] The Despenser family enjoyed a

[14] P. Lindley, 'The Later Medieval Monuments and Chantry Chapels', in R. K. Morris and R. Shoesmith (eds.), *Tewkesbury Abbey: History, Art and Architecture* (Logaston, 2003), 171, suggests the possibility of a source within the abbey itself. Mural tablets with kneeling figures were well established in the Low Countries by the 14th cent., but there is no evidence of their influence on English developments.

long association with the court, and Edward's widow, who probably commissioned the chantry, attended court under Richard II.

Among more conventional monuments the earliest examples of kneeling figures are found on brasses and semi-relief slabs featuring cross shafts, where their shape could be accommodated to the slab's shape. Small kneeling figures of acolytes are placed on either side of a cross shaft with the figure of a priest in the head at Newton Regis (War.), *c*.1330 (Fig. 48). Around the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, at Geddington (Northants) the brass figures of John Mulsho (d. 1400) and his wife are shown kneeling at the foot of a tall shaft, praying to St Faith, who is depicted in the head. Figures showing the deceased kneeling alone were first employed on brasses in the early fifteenth century. In Exeter Cathedral the kneeling figure of Canon William Langton (d. 1413) is shown at prayer in a floor brass in St John's Chapel, close to the tomb of Bishop Stafford, his kinsman (Fig. 28). The idea of transferring the kneeling figure to a position on the wall appears to have originated in the mid-fifteenth century. The germ of the idea was sown when kneeling

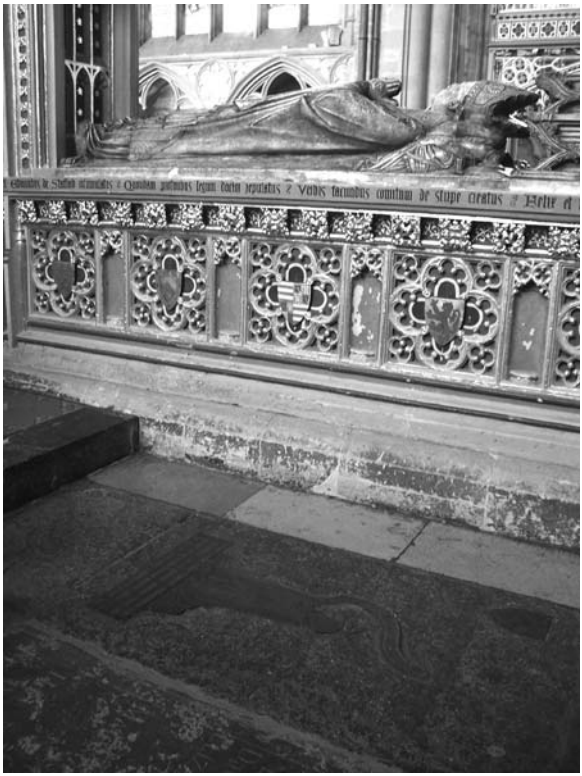

Figure 28. Exeter Cathedral: tomb monument of Bishop Edmund Stafford (d. 1419) and, in front of it, brass of Canon William Langton (d. 1413)

figures were placed on the back panels of tombs in the position previously reserved for painted decoration. At a later stage the figures were emancipated from the tomb setting and placed against the wall within a light architectural surround. The earliest example of a mural brass with small kneeling figures is that of Judge Sir John Cottesmore (d. 1439) and his wife at Brightwell Baldwin (Oxon.) (Fig. 29). Here for the first time a brass, placed on a wall, was interpreted aesthetically in a manner appropriate to its mural location. Other mural monuments were to follow in the second half of the century. Over time this genre merged with another monument type, the canopied tomb set against the wall with a recessed back panel. Tombs of this sort were particularly popular in churches in the London area. When on the north side of chancels they were frequently called on to serve as receptacles for the Easter Sepulchre. The design source for this type of tomb may have been a series of French monuments on which the figures were shown kneeling to entombment scenes.[15]

The main stimulus to the development of the wall monument was probably provided by the increasing pressure on floor space in churches. By the late fifteenth

Figure 29. Brightwell Baldwin (Oxon.): Sir John Cottesmore (d. 1439) and his wife

[15] B. Cherry, 'Some New Types of Late Medieval Tombs in the London Area', in L. Grant (ed.), *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology in London* (BAA Conference Transactions, 10, 1990), 140–54.

century the practice of pewing naves had become widespread, reducing the floor space available for tombs and brasses. In many churches there was a well-established tradition of using recesses along aisle walls to accommodate tombs. When however, as by the fifteenth century, pews extended right to the wall, denying access to low positions, resort had to be made to positions higher up. An early example of a small wall monument is provided by the alabaster half-figures of Sir Godfrey Foljambe and his wife, *c.*1380, at Bakewell (Derby.), placed well above pew level. Later, the use of this elevated position became more common. In the sixteenth century, with the introduction of the brass rectangular plate, it became common to show the commemorated kneeling to a prayer desk. In this way the monument or wall tablet could be invested with a pictorial quality. Sometimes in the late Middle Ages the intercessory discourse of the monument was integrated into that of the neighbouring stained glass windows. At Brightwell Baldwin Judge Cottesmore's mural brass was linked by a couplet addressing St Paul to a still surviving window near by, which he probably also commissioned.

TOMB CHESTS, TOMB CANOPIES, AND ARCHITECTURE

Many of the main developments in medieval tomb sculpture were brought about by the need to differentiate between different types of monument and to draw attention to those of the highest rank. In the thirteenth century, as the patron class grew more status conscious, and the number of monuments in churches increased, so elite patrons looked for new ways of giving expression to their wealth and importance. A notable product of their concern was one of the most significant innovations of the period, the raised monument or tomb chest.

The origins of the tomb chest are probably to be found in the elaborate saints' shrines of the twelfth century. Such structures generally took the form of raised chests with side embrasures into which the sick could insert themselves to be healed. An early example of a chest of shrine type is that of Archbishop Hubert Walter (d. 1205) in Canterbury Cathedral. Although this makes no provision for an effigy, it shows many of the characteristics of later chests. It is rectangular in shape, has arcaded sides, and rises from a moulded base. In place of the figure on top, it has a coped roof decorated with geometrical patterns and relief heads in quatrefoils. Closely related and likewise lacking an effigy is the near-contemporary monument of Bishop Gilbert de Glanville (d. 1214) at Rochester.

More conventional chests supporting effigies came into use in the second quarter of the thirteenth century. One of the best preserved examples is the chest supporting the effigy of a deacon at Avon Dassett (War.), *c.*1220 (Fig. 30). This is of modest height and is decorated with Romanesque colonettes in the centre and at the corners. Somewhat richer is the chest supporting the effigy of Abbot Alexander de Holderness (d. 1226) in Peterborough Cathedral. This too is low but is decorated with shafts and quatrefoils. Good examples of chests from the second half of the century are found on the monuments of Bishop Giles de Bridport (d. 1262) at

Figure 30. Avon Dassett (War.): a deacon, *c.*1220

Salisbury and Pierre d'Aigueblanche (d. 1268) at Hereford. By the fourteenth century the use of chests to indicate monuments of high status had become *de rigueur*. The principal attraction of the chest was that it raised the effigy up, making it the object of attention. A further advantage was that it provided space around the sides for the deployment of heraldry or religious imagery. By the early fifteenth century sculptors, particularly those working in alabaster, were taking full advantage of the opportunities afforded for the development of their art.

The tomb chest was but one of a range of devices by which the highest-ranking patrons could draw attention to their monuments. The most eye-catching of all was the canopy. In medieval architecture, it was the canopy which carried the strongest associations with sanctity and holiness, and which did most to invest a monument with status.

The origins of the canopy are to be found in the niche architecture of 'great church' façades. On the fronts of English churches figures tended to be housed in tabernacle-like niches rather than placed on porch columns as in France. Always attracted by features of architectural character, the English tomb sculptors

transposed the motif to the setting of tomb art. The best canopied effigies of the mid-thirteenth century—for example, those of Bishop Northwold at Ely and the Avon Dassett priest—are conceived essentially as niche figures placed horizontally. The slender shafts of the niche are treated as lateral shafts flanking the figure, while the canopy arch is turned into a gablette over the head. A major drawback to use of architectural surrounds in this way, however, was that it rendered still more acute the tension between vertical and horizontal. The idea was therefore developed of representing the canopy differently—of building it above the figure, and not horizontally, so that it acted as a physical frame for the tomb. On flat monuments—brasses and incised slabs—canopies were still represented horizontally following the three-dimensional model. On monuments with relief effigies, however, the practice became common of constructing canopies upwards, either as free-standing compositions or set against the wall.

The earliest extant canopy built high over a tomb in this way is one of the most shrine-like. This is the magnificent structure enclosing the tomb and effigy of Archbishop Walter de Gray (d. 1255) in York Minster (Fig. 31). Drawing to

Figure 31. York Minster: Archbishop Walter de Gray (d. 1255)

some extent on ideas in Hubert Walter's tomb at Canterbury, it takes the form of an open lower storey carrying an arcade of trefoiled divisions, surmounted by a steeply pitched roof with crocketed gables. The design is of a restrained magnificence appropriate to the archbishop responsible for the superb transept in which the monument lies.[16] Comparable in ambition are the canopies over two other fine episcopal monuments of the thirteenth century. At Salisbury, a cathedral which made much of the cult of episcopacy, the canopy enclosing Bishop Giles de Bridport's tomb is conceived as a miniature building with arcaded sides crowded with ornament, topped as at York with a pitched shrine-like roof. At Hereford, the canopy over the tomb of the Savoyard Bishop Pierre d'Aigueblache is by contrast lighter and more open. Both long sides are divided vertically into three tall sections with gables in the manner of canopies over priests' seats. Within is an unobtrusive roof, the underside of which takes the form of a small vault with ribs and bosses.[17]

Towards the end of the thirteenth century new departures in tomb and canopy design were signalled in a series of monuments in Westminster Abbey. By virtue of its ties with the crown, Westminster Abbey was a building of uniquely high prestige, where architectural developments were widely noticed. In 1245 Henry III had embarked on the creation of a magnificent new church to provide an appropriate setting for the liturgical ceremonies of the English monarchy. Henry's new structure was to be at once a coronation church, a shrine church, and repository for the regalia; it was to perform the functions performed separately in France at Rheims, St-Denis, and the Ste-Chapelle. In 1269 Henry signalled the completion of the eastern parts of his building with a solemn service of dedication at which the remains of his patron, the abbey's second founder, St Edward the Confessor, were translated to a shrine east of the high altar. On his death in 1272 Henry was himself interred in the Confessor's former tomb on the north side of the presbytery.

In the next generation a series of tombs was constructed in the Abbey presbytery which set new standards of cosmopolitanism for English funerary sculpture. These are the tombs of (working from the west) Aveline, countess of Lancaster (d. 1273), Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke (d. 1324), and Edmund, earl of Lancaster (d. 1296). All three are examples of the 'ciborium' tomb, a shrine-like conception akin to a reliquary, the main feature of which is a gabled superstructure over the effigy and chest.[18] The earliest of the group is Countess Aveline's, which dates from the mid-1290s and was probably designed by the mason Michael de Canterbury, who had earlier designed the Cheapside Eleanor Cross.[19] Its main features—the gabled canopy with the cusped arch, the side buttresses, and tomb chest with arcaded

[16] The monument probably dates from 5–6 years after the archbishop's death: M. Sillence, 'The Two Effigies of Archbishop Walter de Gray (d. 1255) at York Minster', *CM* 20 (2005), 5–30.

[17] M. E. Roberts, 'The Tomb of Giles de Bridport in Salisbury Cathedral', *Art Bulletin*, 65 (1983), 559–86; J. Gardner, 'The Tomb of Bishop Peter of Aquablanca in Hereford Cathedral', in D. Whitehead (ed.), *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Hereford* (BAA Conference Transactions, 15, 1995), 105–10.

[18] L. L. Gee, '"Ciborium" Tombs in England, 1290–1330', *JBAA* 132 (1979), 29–41.

[19] J. Harvey, *English Medieval Architects: A Biographical Dictionary down to 1550* (2nd edn., Gloucester, 1984), 45.

front—all have their origins in contemporary French sculpture. There are clear precedents for the design in the series of episcopal tombs in the abbeys of Chaalis and La Couture du Mans, all now lost but recorded by Gaignières. The key motif of the gabled canopy was derived from the gabled entrance portals developed in the Paris region in the 1240s. The 'ciborium' tomb can be seen as the English sculptors' response to the challenge posed by the ideas then circulating at the French court.

Countess Aveline's was by no means the first monument of this type to be commissioned in England. Two episcopal monuments had led the way, those of John Bradfield (d. 1283) at Rochester and John Pecham (d. 1292) at Canterbury, both probably the work of Michael de Canterbury. It was Aveline's tomb, however, which attracted the most attention, partly because of its prestigious location in the Abbey. Her elegantly conceived memorial was shortly joined by two others on the north side of the sanctuary. Occupying the bay to the east was that of her husband, Edmund of Lancaster, commissioned in the late 1290s (Fig. 32). This superb monument, a larger version of her own, gained aesthetically from the addition, on each side of the central gable, of narrower sections of the same design, creating the

Figure 32. Westminster Abbey: Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (d. 1296)

effect of a triple canopy. The third monument, that of Earl Aymer de Valence, was installed in the 1320s and was conceived in the same tradition. Because of the more restricted space, however, it reverted to the model of the single gable. All three monuments set new standards of opulence and grandiosity in English tomb sculpture. Furthermore, they represented the appropriation by the laity of a level of enrichment hitherto associated in England only with senior ecclesiastics.

Away from Westminster, one of the finest monuments of 'ciborium' type was the tomb of William de Louth, bishop of Ely (d. 1298), in Ely Cathedral. Louth, who had served as keeper of the wardrobe under Edward I, probably commissioned his monument directly from Michael de Canterbury's workshop in the capital. The canopy over his tomb followed closely on that of Earl Edmund, consisting of a large central section flanked by a narrower section on each side. In the north of England the most spectacular monument of 'ciborium' type was the Percy tomb in Beverley Minster, a richly decorated gabled construction to the north of the high altar probably commemorating Lady Eleanor Percy (Fig. 37). In the north-west a good example is provided by the gabled monument now in the churchyard at Astbury (Cheshire).

By the early fourteenth century 'ciborium'-type monuments, hitherto treated as free-standing constructions, were being used to frame wall recesses. In France what may be considered 'ciborium' monuments had almost invariably been set against the wall, despite their capacity to stand alone; the construction of a backing wall behind Countess Aveline's tomb, indeed, implied acknowledgement of this tradition. The first examples of the 'ciborium' idea translated to a mural position are found in a series of monuments at Winchelsea (Sussex).[20] The two biggest of these are set against the wall of the south aisle, while three smaller ones are placed facing them on the north side. All five are heavily influenced by developments at Westminster. The two in the south aisle acknowledge Earl Edmund's monument by following its tripartite arrangement of a central gable flanked by two narrower ones. A notable feature of the easternmost of the pair is that its side sections are canted back to emphasize the one in the middle. The architect responsible for the south aisle monuments was almost certainly Michael de Canterbury again. In the north aisle the three monuments, while following broadly the pattern of those opposite, have lower canopies and make use of ogival forms. The three monuments were probably commissioned as a group in the 1320s.

Following its adaptation to the wall position, the 'ciborium' tomb gradually merged into the broader tradition of English wall-recess monuments. For some two centuries the low arch cut into the wall had provided a convenient way of accommodating a monument without causing obstruction to processions. From the early fourteenth century, under the impact of the 'ciborium' idea, the tendency was for these recesses to become bigger and grander in conception. A good example is provided by the canopy over the tomb of a priest, probably William de la Mare, at Welwick (Yorks.), the design of which owes much to that of the Percy tomb at

[20] C. Blair, J. Goodall, P. Lankester, 'The Winchelsea Tombs Reconsidered', *CM* 15 (2000), 5–30.

Beverley (Fig. 44).[21] Above the tomb recess rises a flattened ogee arch, cusped and sub-cusped and vaulted underneath, and above this in turn a crocketed segmental arch and elaborate superstructure. As architectural styles simplified, and canopies became lighter, the gable was eventually dispensed with, leaving the tall ogee arch the main feature. The resulting canopy shape is well illustrated by the monument of Sir John Wingfield (d. 1361) at Wingfield (Suffolk) and, in double form, by that of Sir William de Kerdiston (d. 1361) at Reepham (Norfolk). A closely related design was used to represent three-dimensional canopies on two-dimensional brasses.

A quite different type of design was developed by masons working for the court in the second quarter of the century. This had its origins in the body of ideas explored by Thomas de Canterbury, Michael's kinsman, in a series of major projects at St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester (now Gloucester Cathedral), and other churches related to the 'court'. The earliest and

Figure 33. Gloucester Cathedral: King Edward II, *c*.1330–5

[21] Beverley masons probably worked at Welwick: N. Dawton, 'The Percy Tomb at Beverley Minster: The Style of the Sculpture', in F. H. Thompson (ed.), *Studies in Medieval Sculpture* (London, 1983), 127–8.

most famous example is the canopy over the tomb of King Edward II (d. 1327) at Gloucester (Fig. 33). In essence, this is a rich, yet lightly conceived, study in tabernacle architecture. High over the tomb rise two tiers of ogee arches, the upper smaller and set back, the division between them marked by the barely visible roof of the lower storey. At the top, the canopy culminates in a forest of crocketed gables and pinnacles, creating a towering ensemble of consummate beauty and delicacy. Virtually all of the motifs employed in the design were in regular use in the micro-architecture of the period. Yet they were brought together at Gloucester in a new and distinctive way to create a shrine-like monument, which could act as a focus for the cult of the murdered king.

The striking beauty of the canopy over Edward II's tomb led to it being imitated on monuments in a number of settings in the Severn valley and beyond. In *c*.1350 a canopy of very similar design was constructed over the tomb of Hugh, Lord Despenser and his wife at Tewkesbury a few miles to the north. This canopy directly follows Edward's in employing tiers of open arches which diminish as they rise. Here, however, provision was made for no fewer than four tiers, with roofs at two stages covering the first and second levels. Since the tomb chest had to be wider, to accommodate two effigies, the canopy is made to recede more quickly, tapering on all four sides to a single arch at the top. This beautiful design, lighter and more elegant even than that at Gloucester, was in turn imitated on the adjacent monument of Guy, Lord Brien, *c*.1390.

In the south-east, the influence of William Ramsey's works at St Paul's made itself felt in tomb design alongside that of Edward II's tomb at Gloucester. In the elaborate spired canopy which is the shimmering focal-point of Archbishop Stratford's monument at Canterbury (1348) something of both sources of ideas can be seen. As on the Gloucester monument, the effect is to present the canopy as a symbol of the heavenly dwelling place of the soul. In this case, however, no fewer than three sets of openwork turrets rise skywards, merging luxuriantly as they ascend. Around 1381 a somewhat different type of monument was raised in the bay immediately to the east, to the memory of Archbishop Sudbury. In this design there was a reversion to the tradition of the gabled canopy represented by Edmund of Lancaster's monument in Westminster Abbey. Instead of the openwork spires of the Stratford tomb, there is a flat three-bay canopy, the centre bay wider than the sides, against which is placed a set of projecting ogival gables. The effect is lean and austere, reflecting the influence of the workshop of Henry Yevele, the designer of the cathedral nave. Three-quarters of a century later at Canterbury the tradition of the tabernacle canopy was picked up again for the monument of Archbishop Kemp (d. 1454). Placed in the bay to the west of Stratford's monument, this paid direct tribute to its predecessor by employing the motif of the openwork spires. Tombs in the tradition inaugurated at Gloucester were also raised at York Minster and St Paul's. Archbishop Bowet's monument at York may have been a source of inspiration for the monument of Kemp, who had been primate there before his translation to Canterbury.

All the trends of greatest importance in late medieval tomb design—the adoption and dissemination of the tomb chest, the development of openwork canopies, and

the association of monuments with chantry chapels—were linked by one big idea: the desire to achieve closer integration between tomb monuments and architecture. Tombs were essentially conceived by the fourteenth century as forms of micro-architecture, miniature features which reflected the building around them while yet contributing something to it. Such a conception came naturally to the tomb sculptors, many of whom also worked as masons. In some places a deliberate attempt was made to draw the tomb and its surrounds aesthetically closer together. On two mid-fourteenth-century monuments at Aldworth (Berks.) and Pucklechurch (Glos.) a high ogee canopy was raised over the effigy, forming a rere-arch to the window behind it, and integrating the window into the architecture of the tomb (Fig. 34).[22] In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it became ever more common

Figure 34. Pucklechurch (Glos.): Eleanor, wife of William de Cheltenham, *c.*1350–5

[22] The monument probably commemorates Eleanor, wife of William de Cheltenham, whose own tomb is close by; for this tomb, see below, 240 and Fig. 54. A similar concern for surroundings is shown on another monument of the same period, that of Sir William Hastings (d. 1349) at

for patrons and masons to incorporate tomb provision into the design and construction of chantry chapels. At Northmoor (Oxon.), where the de la More family added transepts in the 1340s, in the northern arm, which served as the de la Mores' chapel, the window was positioned higher than its neighbours, and the string course raised up, to accommodate two tomb recesses and a series of paintings around them. Big architecturally conceived tombs were sometimes incorporated into the screens separating chantry chapels from the aisles, as in the case of the Kirkham chantry at Paignton. The style of late medieval architecture which we recognize as 'Perpendicular' had at its heart the ideal of creating a unified and integrated church interior.

The process of integration, however, was not only driven by aesthetics; it had deep roots in the liturgical needs of those who commissioned monuments. A patron who sought commemoration by a tomb monument had one overriding aim in view: that of securing the well-being of his soul in the afterlife. Beside this, all other aims, even that of status affirmation, were secondary. The setting of the tomb and its relation to its surroundings might well, therefore, have a bearing on its effectiveness in performing its function. Tombs—at least, tombs of the grander sort—were, wherever possible, conceived as parts of an ensemble. At Warwick Earl Richard Beauchamp's tomb was designed to be the focal point of the overall iconographic scheme of the magnificent chapel in which the earl was buried (Fig. 21). In the grander late medieval rebuildings, tombs were integrated with the stained glass in the windows, the sculpture on the window surrounds, and the painted decoration on the walls. The embellishment of churches and the commissioning of tombs went together.

It was in the chancel, the liturgical heart of the church, that the integration of tomb, liturgy, and architecture achieved its fullest realization. In the early fourteenth century, as veneration of the eucharist increased, the practice developed of integrating the tomb architecturally into the rituals of eucharistic worship. For centuries patrons had been in the habit of seeking burial close to the altar so that their monuments would act as *aides-mémoires* to the priest celebrating at Mass. In the mood of Christological intensity in the late Middle Ages they now went further, seeking to maximize the benefit for their souls from the devotions of Holy Week. At the end of the Good Friday liturgy, by tradition, the consecrated Host was carried in procession to a niche on the north side of the altar where a structure symbolizing Christ's tomb would have been prepared for it. In most cases this structure took the form of a temporary wooden receptacle. In a group of east Midland churches in the fourteenth century, however, magnificent masonry recesses were built with which tombs were associated.[23] At Hawton (Notts.) the

Abergavenny: here the pierced backplate above the effigy is curved to match the shape of the window recess in which the tomb is fitted. The theme of the interrelatedness of tomb sculpture and architecture is touched on by T. Tatton-Brown in his discussion of the tombs of Bishops Simon of Ghent and Roger Martival in Salisbury Cathedral: 'The Tombs of the Two Bishops who Built the Tower and Spire of Salisbury Cathedral', *Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Mag.* 88 (1995), 134–7.

[23] For Easter Sepulchres, see A. Heales, 'Easter Sepulchres: Their Objects, Nature and History', *Archaeologia*, 42 (1869), 263–308; V. A. Sekules, 'The Tomb of Christ at Lincoln and the

tomb of the founder and the Easter Sepulchre to its east were linked by a string course which effectively joined them as one. In the fifteenth century the practice of integrating memorialization and the ceremonies of Holy Week was developed further: the tomb itself became the base or setting for the Sepulchre. At Nettlestead (Kent) in 1496 John Pympe asked for burial 'in the place where as the sepulture of oure lords is wounte to stonde at the Fest of Ester and to be leyde there in a tomb of stone'.[24] Tombs which doubled as Easter Sepulchres generally took the form of chests placed in recesses with canopied surrounds. An excellent example, still intact, is provided by the tomb of Richard Covert (d. 1547) at Slaugham (Sussex), which has brasses on the back panel. By the early sixteenth century monuments of this sort were usually decorated with Resurrection imagery. John Clopton's tomb at Long Melford has paintings of the donor's family around the arch and the figure of the risen Christ in the vaulting, while Thomas Smith's tomb at Woodleigh (Devon) is decorated with the Pietà, the Resurrection and the Angel, and the three Marys. For any patron, the idea of associating his or her burial place with that of the Host at Easter was one which exerted an irresistible attraction. It was not only that the physical linking of the two burials represented a gesture of compelling power and intensity; more important, it offered a way of securing the intercessory efforts of the whole parish at Easter. A tomb in the honorific position on the north side of the chancel, symbolizing the right hand of the Father, was a prize much sought after by those with the influence to secure it.[25]

MARKS OF SECULAR STATUS

Large canopied tombs stood at the apex of the funerary hierarchy of honour. Their grandeur and visionary evocation of the Heavenly City pointed to the burial beneath of persons of exceptional distinction. Physical presence thus helped to communicate to the viewer vital information about the person commemorated. Architecture did not stand alone in performing this function. It was but one of a number of systems or motifs through which the monument communicated its message. Heraldry, family badges, merchants' marks, inscriptions, and painted or sculpted imagery all played a role in the articulation of the late medieval funerary discourse.

Heraldry was the most widely used, and the most immediately recognizable, of the languages of secular display on monuments. Since as early as the thirteenth

Development of the Sacrament Shrine: Easter Sepulchres Reconsidered', in T. A. Heslop and V. A. Sekules (eds.), *Medieval Art and Architecture at Lincoln Cathedral* (BAA Conference Transactions, 8, 1986), 118–31.

[24] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/11, fo. 21r–v.

[25] Discussion of the integration of liturgy and memorialization necessarily focuses on the late medieval appropriation of Easter Sepulchres. In the late 13th cent., however, use had sometimes been made of piscinas for commemorative purposes. At Long Wittenham (Berks.) a miniature figure of a knight is placed in front of the piscina basin with, on the arch above it, two angels presumably serenading the soul's ascent.

century blazons had been painted on the surcoats of knightly effigies, on the shields held on their arms by knights or, in the case of the larger monuments, on tomb chests and architectural surrounds. Patrons took a particular interest in the selection of coats of arms for their tombs. In some cases, they specified precisely in their wills which arms were to be shown, and this information would be repeated in the contract.[26] Heraldry was a matter of high importance to members of the armigerous class. Most obviously, it performed the very practical function of assisting identification of the deceased. In a society in which signs could be understood more readily than words, it was principally through the display of blazons that a knight or esquire could be identified. In the fourteenth century, as the language of heraldry became more complex and sophisticated, the range of functions which heraldry performed grew wider. Heraldic displays could assist in locating the commemorated both socially and in terms of kinship. Thus alliances between one family and another were represented by the device of impaling a husband's and wife's arms on a shield, while marks of cadency made possible the distinguishing and identification of family members of the same generation. Through use of the emblematic language of heraldry, a family's lineage history could be captured quickly on a few shields on a tomb. On Joan, Lady Cobham's brass at Cobham, the display of arms captured family links extending over no fewer than four generations (Fig. 24). Heraldry offered a lineage-obsessed society the ideal medium for the expression of concepts of ancestry and honour.

More generally, heraldry contributed in some degree to proclaiming visually the separateness, the apartness, of the upper classes.[27] In the post-Black Death period, when the established orders felt themselves threatened by invasion from below, heraldry provided the armigerous with a convenient means of affirming their ascendancy. Comparatively humble gentry—esquires even—took to having themselves depicted on their tombs in rich heraldic tabards.[28] Heraldry, a pictorial language as important in civilian settings as military, became the outward and visible means for the expression of the solidarity of the well-born and the well-nurtured. If the primary function of heraldry was, as it had always been, to assist in personal identification, it was none the less a system of identification which only the initiated could understand. Heraldry thus assisted in achieving 'exclusionary closure': it created a set of representations which marked the gentle apart from the non-gentle in society.[29] In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when antiquaries recorded ancestral tombs in churches, it was invariably the heraldry in

[26] See above, 92.

[27] P. Coss, 'Knighthood, Heraldry and Social Exclusion in Edwardian England', in P. Coss and M. Keen (eds.), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2002), 39–68.

[28] The earliest surviving brass showing the deceased in a tabard commemorates an esquire—John Wantele (d. 1424), an official of the honour of Bramber; his brass is at Amberley (Sussex). William Finderne, another esquire and a lawyer, was shown in a tabard a few years later on his brass at Childrey (Berks) (Fig. 15).

[29] For closure theory, see S. H. Rigby, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages: Class, Status and Gender* (London, 1995), 9–14.

which they took the closest interest. In this respect, their attitude may well have differed very little from that of the patrons who had commissioned the monuments in the first place.

Closely related to heraldry was the range of devices known as badges. Badges had come into use in the early fourteenth century.[30] By the 1370s all the great magnate families had taken to using such devices—the de Bohuns using the swan, the Staffords the knot, the Beauchamps the bear and ragged staff, and so on. Badges, like coats of arms, formed part of the identificatory repertory of the late medieval upper classes. They were displayed on every possible type of property: on furniture, clothing, domestic plate, even buildings. They differed, however, in one significant respect from coats of arms: they could be given away. For this reason, they could be used as a form of labelling; they could be worn by fee'd retainers to advertise a relationship of lordship and dependence. In the fifteenth century, in the eyes of some contemporaries, badges were the unwelcome outward and visible sign of the less agreeable aspects of magnates' rule of the shires.

Badges were frequently displayed, alongside arms, on the monuments of the late medieval aristocracy. The de Bohun swan was shown on the duchess of Gloucester's brass in Westminster Abbey, the Stafford knot on the earl of Wiltshire's monument at Lowick (Northants), and the bear and ragged staff on Richard Beauchamp's tomb at Warwick. On the grate surrounding Henry VII's monument at Westminster an array of devices was featured, among them the fetterlock, rose, portcullis, fleur-de-lis, and dragon. On the monuments of many senior Lancastrian retainers the highly prized Lancastrian collar of SS was shown, and on those of Yorkist clients the collar of suns and roses. Patrons attached hardly less importance to the representation of these devices than to that of their coats of arms. In his contract with Reames, Richard Willoughby insisted on the planting of a giant whelk shell, his family's badge, on his brass at Wollaton (Notts.)—'instede of a beest', he said; he also requested that another device, an owl, be shown on top of the crest. If, as suggested, the effect of these devices was to compromise the artistic integrity of the monument, it should be remembered that sculptors were merely responding to the instructions of clients. What those who commissioned monuments were looking for was the representation of devices which would make their monuments effective ensigns to status.

The system of signs and symbols worked its way into the visual world of the urban trading classes no less than into that of the rural elites. By the late Middle Ages most merchants were using a system of marks with which to identify the goods they sold. On tombs and brasses these devices were usually displayed on shields. Today they come across as a system of pseudo-heraldry, the mercantile equivalent of armorial bearings; indeed, they bore a close resemblance to aristocratic bearings in that they were personal to the owner and could not be given away. The extent of their use on memorials indicates the strong pride which their owners felt in them. Socially, however, they do not appear to have been considered a

[30] N. E. Saul, 'The Commons and the Abolition of Badges', *Parliamentary History*, 9 (1990), 302–25.

substitute for the more prestigious system of shields of arms. Those who bore and displayed merchants' marks hankered after the respectability of armigerous status, the outward and visible sign of gentility. On his brass at Chipping Campden (Glos.) William Grevel displays his merchant's mark in the oculus of the canopy (Fig. 58) while, above it, is featured what mattered to him more, his coat of arms. Merchants' marks satisfied the late medieval appetite for a visual language of identification. It was full-blown heraldry, however, which carried the stronger connotations of status.

RELIGIOUS ICONOGRAPHY

If the apparatus of secular display was being expanded in the late Middle Ages, so too was the repertory of religious iconography. Even in the status-obsessed world of the fifteenth century patrons never lost sight of the essential duality of the monument as both witness to status and prompt to intercessory prayer. The imagery of devotion, commonly deployed on the tomb surrounds, often contrasted sharply with the secular character of the effigy. In the late Middle Ages schemes of such imagery were increasingly shaped by patrons' regimes of reading and tastes in saintly devotion. The saints chosen for inclusion would be those whom the commemorated believed would be most successful in interceding for his or her soul. The main locations for religious imagery were the sides of the tomb chest and the canopy or tester enclosing it.

The practice of decorating the sides of tombs with religious imagery originated in the early thirteenth century. Small figures of apostles and saints were shown alternating with heads in lozenges on the tomb of Bishop Marshall, *c*.1220, in Exeter Cathedral. A few years earlier, miniature heads in quatrefoils had been included on the tombs of Archbishop Hubert Walter at Canterbury and Bishop Gilbert de Glanville at Rochester.

In the late thirteenth century the practice developed of placing small figures representing kinfolk around the sides of the tomb. This idea, like so much of the vocabulary of contemporary tomb sculpture, was of French origin. Diminutive figures of this kind had appeared on the tombs of Philippe Dagobert (d. 1235) and Louis de France (d. 1260) at the abbey of Royaumont, and of Marie de Bourbon (*c*.1260) at St Yved, Braine. Such figures were introduced at Westminster on the French-influenced tombs of Countess Aveline and her husband Edmund of Lancaster, in the 1290s.[31] Figures of this kind are sometimes referred to, in loose terms, as 'weepers'. The term, however, is misleading, for the figures can hardly be considered mourners for the deceased: they are not shown grieving, nor are they clothed in mourning attire. Rather, they are usually shown sociable, jaunty, and alert—and, in the case of the figures on the Westminster tombs, dressed in the

[31] Seated weepers are shown on the tomb of Bishop Thomas de Cantilupe at Hereford, which is of the same date or very slightly earlier.

height of fashion. It has long been appreciated that the 'weepers' on Edward III's tomb represent members of his family; the figures can be identified from the shields of arms which accompany them. A. M. Morganstern has suggested that on some other monuments the figures are likely to be relatives of the deceased.[32] It is at least arguable that the purpose of representing them on tombs was to encourage intercession on their behalf as beneficiaries of a chantry foundation.

On the Continent, however, by the fifteenth century 'weeper' or 'pleurant' figures were conceived in altogether different terms. On the tombs of the dukes of Burgundy at Dijon the procession of mourning figures evokes the idea of the entourage re-creating the funeral. The weeper figures were shown not jaunty and sociable, but grieving and distraught, their hoods pulled low over their heads. There are few English monuments on which the 'weepers' are represented in this overwrought emotional style. A notable example from the fourteenth century is the Harrington monument at Cartmel, while from the fifteenth there is Richard Beauchamp's monument at Warwick (Fig. 22).[33] In each case the aim of the iconography was to re-create the deceased's funeral, and on the Warwick monument the mourners can be identified as members of the deceased's family. Where the funeral theme is picked up on English monuments it is more commonly achieved through the representation of bedesmen. On John, Lord Willoughby's monument (*c*.1372) at Spilsby (Lincs.) bedesmen are placed in horizontal shafts flanking the figure (Fig. 35), while on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century monuments they are housed in niches round the sides or sometimes below the feet of the figure. Only on Richard Beauchamp's monument is the highly emotional style of the Continent fully absorbed into the repertory of English tomb sculpture. Generally, in the fifteenth century English attendant figures are stiff, and lacking in emotional expression.

On monuments of the fifteenth century, it is figures of angels and saints which are most commonly found occupying the niches round the chest. Angels are encountered for the first time in the late fourteenth century, followed by saints in the early fifteenth. Typically both groups are shown standing, although angels are sometimes represented in other positions and individual saints, such as St Christopher, may exhibit some movement. On alabaster tombs of the fifteenth century it was common for angels to hold shields in front of them, as on the monument of the duchess of Suffolk at Ewelme (Oxon.) (Fig. 70); occasionally, however, they are shown seated in pairs with a shield between, as on Robert Waterton's tomb chest (*c*.1424) at Methley (Yorks.).[34] Angels and saints featured in their respective capacities as representatives of the spiritual world. Their function was to symbolize the heavenly powers and saintly virtues surrounding and assisting the deceased on his or her journey to the afterlife.

[32] Morganstern, 'The Tomb as Prompter for the Chantry', 82–7.

[33] M. Markus, '"An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles"—the Sculptors of the Harrington Tomb, Cartmel', *CM* 11 (1996), 5–24. The weepers on the incised slab of John Lawe in All Saints, Derby (Derby Cathedral), *c*.1480, may represent mourners at a funeral; one of them is a coped priest holding a chalice; see below, 204.

[34] This last posture may be associated with a short-lived workshop at York. It is also found on early 15th-cent. monuments at Harewood.

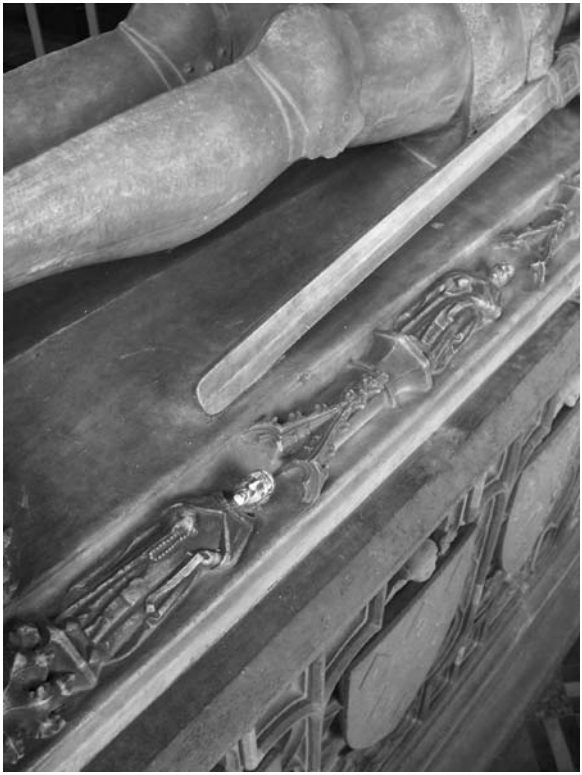

Figure 35. Spilsby (Lincs.): bedesmen on the tomb of John, Lord Willoughby (*c*.1372)

In this body of examples, little or no relation is to be observed between the imagery and the subject of the monument. The role of the figures—whether 'weepers', bedesmen, angels, or saints—was essentially descriptive. In other words, though attending on the person commemorated, they do not directly communicate with him or her, or with the onlooker. In the decorative schemes of many later medieval tombs, however, a more intimate relationship is constructed between the person commemorated and the imagery of devotion. In these, the two are intended to engage with one another and, beyond that, to attract the engagement of the onlooker.

A slightly idiosyncratic example of such discourse is found on the late fifteenth-century tomb of Sir Richard Dalton at Apethorpe (Northants).[35] Here the programme of sculpture—an Annunciation scene, with the Virgin shown with the angel bearing the lily—is crammed into a tiny position on the top of

[35] J. S. Alexander, B. W. Hodgkinson, S. A. Hadcock, 'The Gylbert Monument in Youlgreave Church: Memorial or Liturgical Furnishing?', *CM* 21 (2006), 102.

the tomb, under the knight's headrest. The arrangement of the Apethorpe scheme is one with few parallels, and visually it is unsatisfactory. More commonly, where the headrest position was used for the display of iconography, it was to show angels or saints either supporting cushions or swinging thuribles as the commemorated ascends to heaven, as on King John's tomb at Worcester.

The nub of the problem was that the recumbent position was ill-suited for the representation of schemes of any complexity: the space was insufficient and the horizontal placing inappropriate. It was the vertical position which was the more suitable. Accordingly, on most monuments of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it was on the side panels of the chest that the sculptors chose to deploy religious imagery. A good example is provided by the tomb of Judge William Rudhall (d. 1529) and his wife at Ross-on-Wye (Heref.) (Fig. 36). Here the association of the commemorated with the devotional imagery is found on an end panel at the head of the tomb. In a striking Annunciation scene witnessed by a family group under a canopied arcade, a large image of the Virgin fills one section on the left, while the judge and his family are placed together in the two remaining spaces. Scrolls indicate the greeting of the angel and the Virgin's response, and further scrolls are held by Rudhall and his wife. The Rudhall family are the beneficiaries of a privileged vision, both witnesses to, and suppliants in, a

Figure 36. Ross-on-Wye (Heref.): Judge William Rudhall (d. 1529), end panel of chest

sacred scene. They are shown gazing at the sight before them, yet an oddity of the construction is that that gaze is not returned; it is instead directed towards the viewer. The viewer is thus implicated in the commemorated's relationship with the scene before him. He or she is invited to share in the commemorated's devotion to the Virgin and the imagery associated with her while, at the same time, being prompted to include the commemorated in his prayers when praying to the Virgin himself.

A relationship embracing the viewer was also created by the imagery which commonly decorated the higher parts of church monuments. Just as it was Trinities or Marian imagery which figured on the lower parts, so it was imagery relating to the Resurrection which predominated higher up. One of the finest programmes of this kind is found on the Percy tomb, *c*.1340, in Beverley Minster (Fig. 37). Here, the fate of the deceased's soul after death was traced in a complex

Figure 37. Beverley Minster (Yorks.): the Percy Tomb, *c*.1330–40

scheme without parallel for artistic distinction.[36] The long sequence begins on the south side, with the group depicting Christ receiving the commemorated's soul in a napkin. The soul, represented as a naked figure in prayer, gazes upwards to Christ, who raises his right hand in blessing and supports the arms of the soul with his left. On the north side, in the upper part of the composition, is a representation of the Last Judgement, with Christ baring his wounds flanked by angels on brackets carrying the instruments of the Passion. On the surface of the canopy and on the vault bosses beneath, angels, some with musical instruments, serenade the ascent of the soul to heaven. In the cusping of the arch on the south side Christ and the Virgin are shown as the crowned rulers of heaven, reinforcing the idea of the canopy as a vision of the heavenly Jerusalem. On the outer face of the north arch many of the angels carry scrolls, the lost inscriptions of which probably prophesied the Second Coming, depicted in the statuary above. The mood of ecstasy evoked by the angels is supported by an assortment of subsidiary subjects placed in the minor cusps near the bottom of the arches. St Michael is shown triumphing over a fierce dragon, while St Katherine of Alexandria is represented with the instrument of her torture, the spiked wheel. Also towards the bottom of the arch are representations of the Annunciation and the Nativity. The two scenes emphasize the importance of the Incarnation, prior to which the souls of the dead had been excluded from heaven. Together, they formed a prelude to the images, now lost, which stood on the brackets on the short sides of the canopy, in which the story of the redemption of mankind was completed. The programme on the Percy tomb is at once didactic and visionary, offering a narrative of the Second Coming and affording an insight into the Kingdom of Heaven. It involves the onlooker as both witness and participant, a beneficiary of the unfolding vision and a suppliant for the soul of deceased.

While no single scheme matches that of the Percy tomb in its range and complexity, the themes of redemption and Resurrection were picked up on the canopies of other late medieval monuments. The image of the soul being lifted heavenwards by angels on a cloth was a particularly popular one in funerary sculpture. With its origins in the story of Lazarus being transported by angels into Abraham's bosom, it expressed the Christian hope of salvation in the next world.[37] On the Percy tomb the soul was shown being presented to a seated figure of Christ in Majesty. In a variant depiction on the brass of Laurence Seymour (d. 1337) at Higham Ferrers (Northants) the soul was shown presented to God the Father, shown enthroned. On a number of other monuments no divine personage was

[36] N. Dawton, 'The Medieval Monuments', in R. Horrox (ed.), *Beverley Minster: An Illustrated History* (Beverley, 2000), 134–6. See also P. Lindley, *Tomb Destruction and Scholarship: Medieval Monuments in Early Modern England* (Domington, 2007), ch. 5, where the suggestion is made that the tomb doubled as an Easter Sepulchre.

[37] P. Sheingorn, 'The Bosom of Abraham Trinity: A Late Medieval All Saints Image', in D. Williams (ed.), *England in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 1987), 273–95; S. Badham, 'Status and Salvation: The Design of Medieval English Brasses and Incised Slabs', *TMBS* 15 (1996), 446. An early example of a monument with this imagery is the bas-relief Tournai slab at Ely of Bishop Nigel (d. 1169), showing the Archangel Michael carrying the bishop's soul.

represented; the soul was shown in transit being borne aloft by angels. It is in this way that the subject is treated on the brass of Sir Hugh Hastings (d. 1347) at Elsing (Norfolk) and the monument of Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, in Lincoln Cathedral. On the brass of Walter Beauchamp, *c*.1430, at Checkendon (Oxon.) the soul itself takes centre-stage as the subject of the memorial; instead of the usual lifelike figure of the deceased there is a representation of the soul as a naked body being borne up by angels, with an inscription below. On Dean Prestwick's brass at Warbleton (Sussex) the Resurrection discourse on the figure (the text from Job 19) is complemented by the Pelican imagery in the canopy, the Pelican in her piety being a symbol of charity and the love of God (Fig. 14).[38]

On many late medieval monuments, programmes of sculpted imagery were supplemented by extensive painted decoration.[39] The themes depicted in such schemes tended to mirror those represented in the sculpture. On the back panels of recessed tombs Resurrection imagery was popular, particularly if the tomb was used to house the Easter Sepulchre. On a fourteenth-century tomb at Dodford (Northants) the familiar image of the soul being borne aloft by two angels was represented above a display of family heraldry.[40] On the back of Thomas Mohun's tomb at Lanteglos by Fowey (*c*.1440) there was a painting of Christ rising from the dead while the soldiers were sleeping, fragments of this remaining. On the side wall of a chantry chapel at Northmoor (Oxon.) there was a seated figure of Christ in Majesty, holding an orb with the vexillum, the banner borne by Christ after the Resurrection. On monuments of the clergy the Annunciation was a subject of great popularity. In some cases the opportunity was taken to incorporate the commemorated himself into the scheme. On the back panel of his tomb at Maidstone (Kent) John Wootton, first Master of Maidstone College (d. 1417), is shown presented to the Virgin by the angel Gabriel, with St Katherine and St Mary Magdalene in the background. In a poorly preserved scheme of the Coronation of the Virgin at Clifton Campville (Staffs.) the kneeling figures of a knight and his lady (*c*.1345)—presumably the commemorated—look up from below.[41] In the richer and more complex schemes, a visual connection was established between the figure of the commemorated and the broader iconographic programme. At Ingham (Norfolk) the effigy of Sir Oliver Ingham (d. 1344) is shown twisting over to look at the scene from the life of St Giles which once adorned the panel behind him. Where there was a tester over the effigy, the gaze of the figure was made to fix intently on the image on its under-side. At Canterbury the Black Prince's eyes are fixed on the image of the Trinity, reflecting his interest in the Trinity and the setting of his tomb in the Trinity Chapel. In some cases—notably Alice

[38] The Pelican in her piety refers to the myth of the pelican feeding her young with her own blood—the scene depicted on the canopy of the Warbleton brass.

[39] M. C. Gill, 'Late Medieval Wall Painting in England: Content and Context (*c*.1330–*c*.1530)' (University of London Ph.D. thesis, 2002), 426–8.

[40] M. H. Bloxam, 'On the Medieval Sepulchral Antiquities of Northamptonshire', *Archaeological Jnl.* 35 (1878), 259.

[41] For Northmoor and Clifton Campville, see E. W. Tristram, *English Wall Painting of the Fourteenth Century* (London, 1955), 157, 229.

Chaucer's double-decker tomb at Ewelme—the tester painting was 'visible' only to the occupant of the tomb, creating a private dialogue between the deceased and the intercessor in which the intercessor's aid was sought.[42] In the larger, more public commemorative programmes, effigy, tomb, and surroundings were integrated into a single scheme which involved the viewer too. At St Mary's, Warwick, Earl Richard Beauchamp's ascent to heaven is serenaded by a chorus of angels in the window glass, while the earl himself raises his hands in wonder, his gaze fixed on the figure of the Virgin on the roof boss above.

The precise combination of imagery chosen to decorate a tomb or chapel turned largely on the patron's own tastes in devotion. A major influence is likely to have been the reading of devotional works such as primers and books of hours. The Marian imagery on Sir Thomas Stathum's brass at Morley (Derby.) (Fig. 17) was probably inspired by the family's devotion to the cult of the Virgin revealed in, and shaped by, the family's book of hours.[43] In the case of the grander decorative schemes, intellectual influences are likely to have been at work. A scheme as complex as that on the Percy tomb could only have originated in the mind of an educated clerk, probably a graduate of the schools. In the case of lesser schemes, the main influences are likely to have been family piety, connections with local monasteries, and the devotional tastes of kinsmen and neighbours. A little can be said about the likely sources of the imagery on the monument of Sir Hugh Willoughby (d. 1448) at Willoughby on the Wolds (Notts.). At the head and foot of Sir Hugh's tomb are a pair of panels illustrating teachings about the redemption of the world by God's power. At the head is a 'Throne of Grace' Trinity, of standard late medieval form, and at the opposite end a representation of the Virgin as Queen of Heaven. This second panel is unconventional in character: while the Virgin is seated frontally, her head turns in adoration to the Christ Child on her knee, and she holds in her hand a flowering branch, upon which a dove has alighted and to which the Child reaches out with an apple in his hand (Fig. 38). It is possible to connect the imagery of these panels with Sir Hugh's interest in the Carthusian Order. The themes depicted—the passion and grief of the Virgin—were also the themes of the *Speculum Vitae Humanae*, which is believed to have been composed around 1390 at the Carthusian house of Beauvale, not far from Willoughby. Sir Hugh was a member of the lay confraternity of Beauvale, and in his will he left a bequest to the Charterhouse in London.[44] His distinctive choice of imagery may have owed something to the influence of Carthusian thought and writing on his piety.

Medieval monuments were thus carefully constructed objects which, to communicate their message, drew on a range of secular and religious motifs. In part, their

[42] The roughly executed paintings are on the roof of the cadaver space occupying the bottommost tier of the tomb: J. A. A. Goodall, *God's House at Ewelme* (Aldershot, 2001), 186–9.

[43] A. R. Dufty, 'The Stathum Book of Hours', *Archaeological Jnl.* 106 (1949). Strangely, the Book gives no indication of a devotion to the cult of St Christopher, which is a feature of far more of the brasses.

[44] J. Denton, 'The East Midland Gentleman, 1400–1530' (University of Keele Ph.D. thesis, 2006), 75–7.

Figure 38. Willoughby on the Wolds (Notts.): Sir Hugh Willoughby (d. 1448), end panel of chest

imagery was self-referential: the motifs articulated the patron's aspirations both for this world and the world to come in the hope of promoting their achievement. In part too, however, the imagery was designed to answer certain questions. The most important of these was: what sort of person is buried here? No monument was ever conceived in social isolation; it took the place of the deceased and helped to preserve his or her memory in the community. Alongside this social function, however, sat the overriding liturgical function. In a society which attached such high importance to foreshortening the pains of Purgatory, monuments served as clarion calls to intercession. For this reason the elaborate schemes of sacred iconography performed a pivotal role in assisting the passage of the soul on its heavenly journey.

8

The Monuments of Ecclesiastics

THE CELEBRATION OF EPISCOPACY

Effigial monuments were designed to locate the deceased in the setting of a divinely ordained order and to do so by indicating social position through personal attire. In the traditional conception of society, the first order or estate was made up of the clergy. The monuments of the clergy rank among the richest and most distinguished of the Middle Ages.

The senior clergy were pioneers in the use of effigial monuments. The earliest sculpted effigies to survive in the British Isles were mostly to the memory of bishops and wealthy abbots. At the head of the series are the three relief slabs to abbots of Westminster and the semi-relief effigies of two bishops at Salisbury, all dating from the later twelfth century.[1] These effigies, although striking, are stiff and experimental in treatment. From early in the next century come a series of more accomplished figures at Worcester, Carlisle, Sherborne, and Ely, these showing a more realistic treatment of drapery in the round. In some cases a concession was made to the recumbent posture by placing a cushion under the head and by allowing the drapery folds to fall onto the base slab. By the 1250s it was common on episcopal monuments for the figure to be accommodated in a niche with the arms clasped to the body and the right hand raised in blessing. Effigies of bishops and abbots, often carved in Purbeck marble, are fairly common from 1250. Good examples are provided by the figures of Bishops Northwold (Fig. 39) and Kilkenny at Ely and Bishop Lawrence de St Martin at Rochester.

The tomb of a medieval bishop was more than a monument to an individual. It constituted a celebration of the episcopal estate as a whole. Through the medium of sepulchral commemoration it brought honour to the episcopal office, paid tribute to the episcopacy as a hierarchy, and exalted and dignified the instruments of Christ's rule over his Church. On his tomb the bishop was shown suave and serene, his face idealized so as to suggest spirituality. Typically he was shown in the act of blessing the congregation. The effigy gave physical expression to the concept of the prelate who brought order to his see, shepherded his flock, and defended the rights of his Church.

The growing popularity of the episcopal effigy coincided with an era of reform and renewal in the Church, when a new emphasis was placed on the pastoral work

[1] For these, see above, 30–2. And note the possibility that the effigy at Bathampton commemorates a 12th-cent. bishop of Bath and Wells: ibid.

of the episcopate. Following the lead of the Third Lateran Council, the hierarchy showed a new interest in cure of souls, in offering instruction to the faithful, and establishing a code of penitential discipline. The moral vigour of the Church was reflected in the remarkable number of new saints drawn from the ranks of the bishops. In 1220 canonization was bestowed on the learned and ascetic Hugh of Avalon, bishop of Lincoln, who died in 1200. A couple of years later, the same honour was bestowed on two other prelates, Lawrence O'Toole, archbishop of Dublin, and William Fitzherbert, archbishop of York. In 1246 the cult of Edmund of Abingdon, Langton's distinguished successor at Canterbury, was recognized, and in 1262 that of Richard Wych at Chichester. Coupled with these elevations were a number of popular or unofficial canonizations of bishops who were renowned for the quality of their lives. Ralph Niger, bishop of London, Walter Suffield, bishop of Norwich, and above all Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, were the subject of cults encouraged by the miracles which occurred at their tombs.

The growth of popular cults around bishops of unblemished life had a strong influence on the stylistic development of their monuments. There was a tendency for tombs to become increasingly shrine-like. Bishops who had led saint-like lives were honoured with tombs of shrine-like character. The intention was avowedly propagandist. A campaign for an episcopal candidate to be canonized could be promoted by the rehousing of the body in a tomb which would encourage the perception of him as a saint. The canons of Lincoln were thus quick to respond when the stirrings of a cult were felt around Bishop Grosseteste after his death in 1253. Grosseteste's body was reinterred in a tomb of deliberately shrine-like character with deep, trefoil-headed niches enabling pilgrims to creep as close as possible to the body.[2] What the canons of Lincoln did for Grosseteste the clergy of other cathedrals did for their own candidates for sainthood. At Hereford in 1287 Bishop Thomas Cantilupe's body was interred in a grand new monument designed to promote the campaign for his canonization. It is possible that the lost tomb of Grosseteste was the prototype for a whole group of shrine-like monuments including the major compositions for Archbishop Walter de Gray at York (d. 1255) (Fig. 31), Bishops Giles de Bridport (d. 1262) at Salisbury and Pierre d'Aigueblanche (d. 1268) at Hereford. None of these bishops was venerated as a saint. Yet each was honoured with a tomb of shrine-like character. A monument-type which had its origins in the identification of virtue now took on the role of a mark of rank. Its function was to draw attention to the dignity of the episcopal office through the person of its holder. On some monuments the opportunity was taken to convey a message about the mission of the Church. The sides of Bishop Bridport's monument at Salisbury were decorated with bas-reliefs illustrating the bishop's career as a teacher.[3]

[2] D. A. Stocker, 'The Tomb and Shrine of Bishop Grosseteste in Lincoln Cathedral', in W. M. Ormrod (ed.), *England in the Thirteenth Century* (Harlaxton, 1985), 143–8.

[3] M. E. Roberts, 'The Tomb of Giles de Bridport in Salisbury Cathedral', *Art Bulletin*, 65 (1983), 559–86. The reliefs may have been for the edification of the scholars of de Vaux College at Salisbury, which the bishop had founded.

On the Continent, the onlooker's attention was drawn to the dignity of the episcopal office by the use of cast metal for the effigies of bishops. In the first half of the thirteenth century a small number of high-quality cast metal figures were produced for senior prelates in France. At Amiens Bishops Evrard de Fouilloy (d. 1222) and Geoffroi d'Eu (d. 1236) were both commemorated by sumptuous metal effigies, still extant.[4] In Savoy, Boniface of Savoy, archbishop of Canterbury, is known to have been commemorated by a metal effigy at the abbey of Hautecombes. In England cast metal was only occasionally used for episcopal effigies, perhaps because of its cost and prestigious associations. At Lincoln Bishop Grosseteste is known to have been commemorated by a cast bronze effigy, which drew attention to his personal distinction. Three other thirteenth-century bishops and at least one other senior ecclesiastic were probably commemorated by effigies of similar kind. At Wells, Leland recorded cast metal effigies on the tombs of Bishop Joscelin (d. 1242) and William Bitton (d. 1264). Wells was a cathedral at which considerable importance was attached to the episcopal office because of the competition it faced from Bath. At York in the next generation a cast copper-alloy effigy was commissioned for the tomb of a dean, William Langton (d. 1279), a man of high ambition and the nephew of Archbishop Gray.[5] By the later part of the thirteenth century, however, the scope for the use of cast metal for episcopal monuments was limited by the developing association between cast metal and the tombs of royalty. At Westminster, Torel's effigies of Henry III and Queen Eleanor, dating from the 1290s, were both of cast metal. For high-status episcopal effigies the most highly esteemed material until the end of the century was Purbeck marble. The brilliant shine which the marble took when polished accorded well with the aesthetic of an age which valued rich polychromatic effects.

Given the constraints on the use of cast metal, the main way in which the status of a particular cleric could be indicated was through the medium of sculpted imagery. On the most elaborate monuments a range of allusions might be developed relating the tomb to its surroundings or to the cult of a saint buried near by. Iconographically, the richest scheme is found on the tomb of Bishop Hugh de Northwold (*c.*1250), who was responsible for building the Ely presbytery (Fig. 39).[6] The figure of the bishop, clothed in mass vestments, is shown standing on a lion and a dragon. On each side of him rise foliage-covered columns, which support crocketed pinnacles and a cinquefoiled arched canopy. Above the canopy are four, now very damaged, angels. Two are shown swinging censers, while the others carry the bishop's soul upwards in a cloth. Along the sides are two tiers of small figures in niches. The three male figures to the bishop's right represent, in

[4] N. Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments, 1270–1350', in Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, 22.

[5] For these tombs, see ibid.; and S. Badham, 'A Lost Bronze Effigy of 1279 from York Minster', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 60 (1980), 59–65.

[6] The best discussion is M. E. Roberts, 'The Effigy of Bishop Hugh de Northwold in Ely Cathedral', *Burlington Magazine*, 130 (1988), 77–84.

Figure 39. Ely Cathedral: Bishop Hugh de Northwold (*c.*1250)

descending order, a king, a bishop, and a monk, while the three female figures to his left are a crowned abbess, a queen, and a nun. The intricate carving on the tomb relates it to the elaborate carving of the presbytery in which it lies. The tomb exhibits in miniature the same lavish ornamentation as the presbytery walls, in which nearly all the architectural elements, capitals, spandrels, and vault bosses are embellished with carved details—foliage, dogtooth, crockets, and sunken trefoils. The few fragments of the shrine of Ely's founder, St Etheldreda, which was decorated with foliage sprays, indicate that it too was sumptuously fitted out. Reference was made to the shrines near by in the sculpture on the tomb. The figure of the crowned abbess in the topmost niche on the right is obviously to be identified with St Etheldreda, while the figure of the queen beneath is probably that of another of Ely's female saints. Reference was also made to Northwold's earlier career as abbot of Bury. Beneath the feet of the effigy is a narrative relief depicting the martyrdom of Bury's saint, St Edmund. The imagery of the tomb blends the spiritual with the temporal within the context of a clear hierarchical structure. At the foot, a kingly martyr meets his end at the hands of a band of evil men. Above, Northwold is shown as a living embodiment of the Church, triumphing over evil. Surrounding and supporting him are members of the monastic order, their leaders shown subduing beasts of the devil. The flowered columns, the canopy, and the towers all envelop the figure in a shimmer of ornament, evocative of the presbytery in which Northwold's body was laid. The tomb is believed originally to have lain just east of St Etheldreda's shrine. High above, in the vault, is a boss with a carving of a beardless monk with a cowl over his head and holding a model of a church in his hand. The figure is probably to be identified with that of Northwold himself. Unlike those tombs—the majority—which were constructed when needed, Northwold's tomb forms an integral part of the grand new fabric which he commissioned and largely financed. It was a memorial in which the monks of both Bury and Ely could take pride.

Northwold's tomb was not unique in celebrating the life and achievements of a great bishop. At Salisbury, Bishop Wyvill's remarkable brass of *c.*1375 paid tribute to his work in recovering the lost temporalities of his see. In 1355 Wyvill, a former royal clerk, had recovered Sherborne castle and the chase of Bere from the earl of Salisbury in a lawsuit which had nearly ended in a trial by battle. The brass, which has no known parallels, is rich in allusions to the dispute. Wyvill looks out from a castle window, turrets rising above and around him, while his champion stands below at the gate, armed with a shield and a war hammer. Rabbits and hares running in the foreground allude to Bere chase. The sources of the design are probably to be found in the idea of the beleaguered lady rescued from her castle by a knight. The Church was often invested in the Middle Ages with a female identity.

If monuments could celebrate a bishop's personal achievements, they could also affirm the historicity of an episcopal line. In the ecclesiastical reorganizations which characterized the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, a number of bishops had

moved their seats to new sites, typically major towns or administrative centres. In many cases, these new sites were without an authenticating history and lacked any support from the cult of a local saint. In such circumstances, monuments might be called on to provide the witness which the documentary record could not. In the 1220s, when the bishops of Salisbury moved their seat from Old Sarum to a site in the Avon valley, particular care was taken to ensure that the episcopal monuments were moved with them (Fig. 6). The old monuments bestowed the legitimacy of tradition on the bishops at the new site. In those cathedrals where the need was felt for monuments but none existed, they were simply fabricated. At Wells in the 1190s a series of retrospective effigies was commissioned when, following the rebuilding of the choir, the remains of the Anglo-Saxon bishops were ceremonially reinterred. Wells's difficulty was that it faced a challenge to its cathedral status from its rival Bath, and the effigies, all carefully named, afforded evidential weight to its version of its history. At Hereford a series of effigies was commissioned in the early fourteenth century to line the processional way to the tomb—shortly to be the shrine—of its former bishop, Thomas Cantilupe, who was a candidate for canonization; the effigies were intended to enhance the status of this relatively minor see, and again were all named.[7] Monuments, whether contemporary or retrospective, could attest the ancient identity of a cathedral and confer legitimacy on it as the seat of a bishop.

The episcopate's liking for showy memorials was to be a feature of their commemorative taste for the rest of the Middle Ages. Even at minor cathedrals like Rochester the monuments of bishops were grand, state-of-the-art, and eye-catching. At some cathedrals—at Exeter, for example—the monuments formed part of a more general cult of episcopacy: a cult which served as a substitute for the saints' cults, which those cathedrals lacked.

However, at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a major change occurred in the type of funerary monument to which bishops gave their patronage. To this time, the bishops had generally commissioned two main types of monument—the sculpted effigy, either of Purbeck marble or freestone, and the cross slab. After 1300, however, their preference shifted to a newly fashionable type of memorial, the brass. The older types of monument were by no means wholly abandoned. At some of the grandest cathedrals—Winchester and Canterbury, for example—sculpted monuments were still regularly commissioned down to the Reformation. Moreover, in the fifteenth century alabaster monuments enjoyed considerable popularity in the western and midland cathedrals. None the less, it is undeniable that a major shift in commemorative taste occurred.[8] In the late Middle Ages newly fashionable brass memorials carved out a strong position for themselves in the episcopal market.

[7] P. Lindley, 'Retrospective Effigies, the Past and Lies', in D. Whitehead (ed.), *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Hereford* (BAA Conference Transactions, 15, 1995), 111–21.

[8] Even at Winchester there was one episcopal brass: for Thomas Langton, bishop 1493–1501. The indent remains: W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (London, 2007), 332, 335.

The bishops' enthusiasm for brasses had probably been kindled by the cast metal effigies of the thirteenth century. These monuments not only had the attraction of being very splendid, they also went some way to satisfying the contemporary appetite for brightness. It is possible, too, that they had a symbolic appeal: through their golden aspect they reminded the onlooker of the need for intercessory prayer, the biblical metaphor of the refining of gold being an image of the testing of the soul. Like all relief effigies, however, these monuments suffered from two big disadvantages: they took up space; and they blocked processional routes. Brasses did not suffer from these drawbacks; they could be assimilated more easily to their surroundings. Laid flush with the aisle floor, they did not impede passage.[9] There was the further advantage that they could be intruded into positions denied to big relief monuments. Set in eye-catching positions near shrines, they could attract prayer more effectively for the deceased's soul.

The rapid spread of brasses across the episcopal market can be traced in the surviving evidence.[10] The first brasses to bishops were laid in the 1270s or 1280s, an excellent example being that of Bishop Thomas Cantilupe in Hereford Cathedral, which is known to have been in place by 1287 (a small fragment survives).[11] By the second decade of the fourteenth century there is evidence of the commissioning of episcopal brasses in most of England's cathedrals. Virtually all of these very early examples are now lost, but they are known either from indents or from antiquarian sources. The grandest was probably the brass of Bishop Louis de Beaumont (d. 1333) in Durham Cathedral, the mighty slab of which, made up of two parts, survives in front of the high altar. From the period 1360–1420 a number of episcopal brasses have come down to us more or less intact. Of particular note are the fine memorials of Bishop Trilleck at Hereford (d. 1360) and Archbishops Waldeby (d. 1397) and Cranley (d. 1417) in Westminster Abbey and New College, Oxford respectively. An outstanding example from the sixteenth century is the brass of Bishop Goodrich (d. 1554) in Ely Cathedral.[12] Unfortunately the wave of iconoclasm in the cathedrals in the Civil War and Interregnum exacted a particularly heavy toll on the monuments of the senior clergy. Only a small number of the episcopal brasses which were once laid have come down to us. In many cathedrals, however, where the brasses themselves have vanished, the indents are still to be seen. At Rochester an outstanding series of episcopal indents gives an idea of the scale of episcopal commemoration in even a minor cathedral.[13] Whether

[9] The St Albans writer notes the problem of obstruction caused by a 'marble' slab, presumably a relief slab, in the chapter house. The slab, which commemorated Adam Lyons, a cellarer, 'projected above the pavement and, liable to trip people up as they passed, was taken up and laid aside': *Annales Monasterii Sancti Albani a Johanne Amundesham Monacho*, i, ed. H. T. Riley (Rolls Series, 28, 1870), 435.

[10] Rogers, 'English Episcopal Monuments', 38–65.

[11] This brass is actually placed on a tomb in recognition of the status of person commemorated.

[12] Commissioned in the Catholic revival of Mary's reign, this is a consciously archaizing memorial showing the bishop in Mass vestments under a Gothic-style canopy: W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire* (London, 1995), 107.

[13] N. E. Saul, 'The Medieval Monuments of Rochester Cathedral', in T. Ayers and T. Tatton-Brown (eds.), *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rochester* (BAA Conference Transactions, 28, 2006), 164–80.

they were commemorated in brass or marble, the bishops saw the commissioning of their monuments as a way of affirming the dignity and prestige of the episcopal estate.

THE CATHEDRAL CLERGY: A STUDY IN SPLENDOUR

England's cathedrals were staffed by a body of clergy whose primary duty was to oversee the *opus dei*, the daily round of Masses and prayer in the church. Some cathedrals were served by communities of monks—that is to say, by the brethren of a priory attached to the cathedral—the majority, however, by secular canons who drew their income from their prebends. Typically both monks and canons were buried and commemorated in the cathedrals they served. Of the two groups, the canons were much the more splendid in their commemorative estate. Their tombs and brasses were sometimes of a size and richness to match those of the bishops.

In the late Middle Ages the canons formed a miscellaneous body of men, with varied backgrounds and interests.[14] A significant minority were royal civil servants, men who had risen through service to the Crown; a high proportion of the others university graduates, specialist theologians or canon lawyers. At many cathedrals by the thirteenth century a major problem was caused by the evil of non-residence. The practice had developed of using prebends to reward high-flying careerists who devoted the greater part of their time to business elsewhere. According to most bodies of statutes, canons were under obligation to reside. The obligation, however, was very difficult to enforce. By the late Middle Ages, the emphasis in legislation had shifted to ensuring the presence of a sufficient proportion of the chapter to sustain performance of the *opus dei*. By the fourteenth century it was already quite common for the canons' duties in the choir to be performed by a body of vicars choral. Where the personal involvement of the canons was most urgently needed was in attending to matters of administration, and by the late twelfth century at most cathedrals the four main officers—dean, precentor, treasurer, and chancellor—were expected to reside. The other canons were divided into the residentiaries and the non-residentiaries, each with their own carefully defined duties and privileges.

A number of England's cathedral chapters were very large bodies. The well-endowed trio of Lincoln, Salisbury, and Wells were the largest of all. Lincoln had 58 prebendaries, Wells 55, and Salisbury 52. Next came York Minster with 36, Lichfield with 32, and Chichester with thirty. Hereford and Exeter were the two smallest cathedral chapters with 28 and 24 prebendaries respectively. The value of the prebends varied considerably. A number of them were very wealthy, indeed among the wealthiest cathedral preferments in Europe. The richest prize was the

[14] For a sketch, see K. Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages* (2nd edn., Manchester, 1967), ch. 1.

prebend of Masham in York Minster, worth no less than 250 marks a year. Some of the other York prebends were worth over 100 marks a year, and many more than fifty marks. At Hereford, on the other hand, the prebends were much poorer: even the most valuable of them were not worth more than about £20 a year. In the majority of England's cathedrals the prebends lay somewhere between these extremes in value, being worth roughly 30–60 marks per annum. At Lincoln, a cathedral, like York, with well-endowed stalls, the figure was typically at the upper end of the scale.

The splendour of the canons' memorials owed a lot to the wealth at the disposal of those who commissioned them. The holders of the richest prebends enjoyed incomes comparable with those of well-to-do lords and gentry. Even the occupants of lesser stalls enjoyed incomes in excess of many of the parish clergy. Prebends, moreover, could be held in plurality. Not uncommonly, ambitious clerical careerists were to be found holding three, four, or five preferments at the same time. Those prebendaries who held senior positions in the royal civil service might also be in receipt of fees from the exchequer. Small wonder that some well-off pluralists, when offered bishoprics, declined because the obligation to lay aside their other preferments would have left them poorer.

With such generous resources at their disposal, the richer canons could commission memorials on the most lavish scale. A few commissioned sculpted effigies with canopies. At Hereford, Dean John d'Aigueblanche (d. 1320) made provision for a stone effigy near the tomb of his uncle Bishop Pierre d'Aigueblanche.[15] The great majority, however, certainly in the post-Black Death period, went for a less intrusive but still prestigious memorial—the brass. Their reasons for doing so were much the same as those of the bishops. Brasses offered the boon of commemorative splendour without the twin drawbacks of taking up space and causing obstruction. They could be laid in sensitive positions near shrines and high altars—indeed, in any position where they might catch the eye of intercessors; yet they neither obstructed processions nor offended the conventions of decorum.

The earliest brasses honouring canons took the form of figures in the heads of tall crosses. In terms of design there was little to distinguish these from the brasses of other well-to-do clergy: cross brasses were popular with all ranks of the clergy at the time. Relatively few of these elegant memorials have come down to us. More than most ecclesiastical brasses, they suffered at the hands of the iconoclasts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One excellent extant example, almost complete, is that of Canon Richard de la Barr (d. 1386) at Hereford (Fig. 40). Here, the figure of the deceased, wearing a cope, is shown in the head of an octofoil cross rising from a tall shaft with a stepped base. Brasses of this character were once very common in the secular cathedrals. Indents stripped of their inlays may still be seen in the floors of the choir aisles at Lincoln.

[15] Dean d'Aigueblanche probably also commissioned his uncle's tomb: J. Gardner, 'The Tomb of Bishop Peter of Aquablanca in Hereford Cathedral', in D. Whitehead (ed.), *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Hereford* (BAA Conference Transactions, 15, 1995), 105–10.

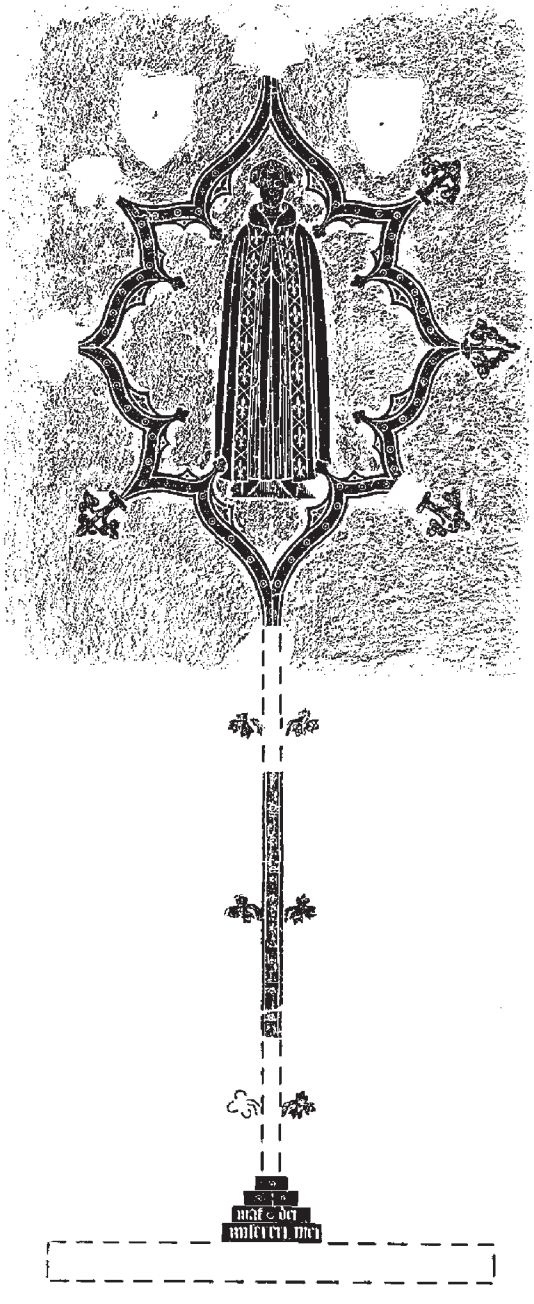

Figure 40. Hereford Cathedral: Canon Richard de la Barr (d. 1386). Rubbing of brass

In the fifteenth century cross brasses were to pass almost completely out of fashion for reasons now difficult to identify. From this time ordinary canons generally commissioned medium-sized figure brasses with foot inscriptions, while the dignitaries and richer prebendaries went for memorials on the grand scale—big canopied brasses similar to those of the bishops. Brasses of both types were once very common in the cathedrals. Dugdale recorded many fine examples at Lincoln and St Paul's, while Dingley noted them at Hereford. The great majority of these memorials, however, are now lost, the victims of a combination of iconoclasm and neglect (Fig. 10).

Among those examples which survive, the largest and most complete is the brass of Edmund Frocester, dean of Hereford (d. 1529), in Hereford Cathedral (Fig. 41). This is a vast composition which he probably commissioned in his lifetime.[16] Frocester is shown in a cope under an ornate triple canopy with inhabited side buttresses and a marginal inscription surrounding the whole. The pomegranate pattern of his cope bears a distinct resemblance to that worn by Canon Rudhall on his brass of 1476 in the same cathedral. The similarity suggests that there was a distinct style which Hereford patrons looked for when ordering their memorials.[17] As the evidence of wills indicates, cathedral dignitaries, when commissioning tombs or brasses, would often ask for one modelled on an existing memorial in their cathedral.[18] In this way the standard cathedral type of brass got replicated over and over again. Often the figures in the side buttresses would include saints who ranked among the cathedral's patrons. Thus at Hereford St Ethelbert was shown on the brasses of Dean Frocester and Canons Rudhall and Porter, and St Thomas Cantilupe on the brass of Canons Rudhall and Porter. Much earlier, on an incised slab at Winchester commemorating Prior Basyng symbols for the saints to whom the cathedral was dedicated were included—keys to the left of the figure for St Peter, and a sword to the right for St Paul.[19] The arms of the cathedral might also be represented on shields. As with the monuments of the bishops, there was a clear sense in which the memorial honoured the cathedral as an institution, not just the dignitary commemorated.

THE MONUMENTS OF THE REGULARS

In the late thirteenth century there were probably some 16,900 male regulars in England. Of these some 7,700 were monks, 3,900 regular canons, and a

[16] Frocester was an Oxford graduate, and dean of Hereford from 1513: A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500* (3 vols., Oxford, 1957–9), ii. 732.

[17] P. Heseltine and H. M. Stuchfield, *The Monumental Brasses of Hereford Cathedral* (London, 2005), 22. The pomegranate was a symbol of the Resurrection.

[18] For this practice, see above, 104.

[19] S. Badham and M. Norris, *Early Incised Slabs and Brasses from the London Marblers* (London, 1999), 102–4.

Figure 41. Hereford Cathedral: Dean Edmund Frocester (d. 1529). Rubbing of brass

further 5,300 friars.[20] The figure probably represents the highest ever reached for the regulars in the medieval period. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries numbers were brought down by successive plague visitations, while at the same time there was a decline in recruitment. On the eve of the Reformation it is doubtful if there were more than 9,000–10,000 regulars in England. The heyday of monasticism in England had lain in the period from the eleventh century to the thirteenth.

It is possible to sketch only an outline picture of the commemorative tastes of the regulars because so few of their memorials have come down to us. For the most part, our knowledge is confined to the contents of that minority of monastic churches which survived the Reformation to become parish churches or cathedrals.

It is fortunate in the circumstances that for one of those churches we have a unique source—the fifteenth-century account of the monuments in St Albans Abbey.[21] This remarkable text surveys all the marked burials in the church and convent, beginning with those in the choir and presbytery, continuing with the early slabs in the chapter house, and turning finally to the tombs and slabs in the transepts and nave. To an author like the monk, the monument of a member of the house was a mnemonic trigger which prompted recollection of the commemorated's personal virtues, achievements in office, or gifts to the church. In the monk-author's eyes, the abbey's monuments were a storehouse of memory, a physical record of those whose lives and deeds were deserving of commendation. This was an outlook which came naturally to someone living in a community with a strong sense of its history. The monks of St Albans saw themselves as upholders of an unbroken tradition stretching back to pre-Conquest antiquity. In their eyes, ensuring the commemoration of the most distinguished members of their house was a duty incumbent on them all. In the 1360s it was the reigning abbot—Thomas de la Mare—who took it upon himself to ensure the proper commemoration of his predecessor Michael Mentmore. A century later, it was the community as a whole which chose to memorialize one of their number, Robert Beauvor, who was admired for his long and distinguished service to the house (Fig. 43).[22]

Because of his readiness to see the monuments as windows onto the lives of those they commemorated, the writer's comments on the monuments themselves are disappointingly brief. He tells us whether a monument is flat or sculpted, and whether or not it has an inscription. He distinguishes between monuments of alabaster and those of freestone or marble. He usually says whether or not a memorial takes the form of a brass. Yet, remarkably in our eyes, he fails to

[20] S. H. Rigby, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages: Class, Status and Gender* (London, 1995), 213.

[21] *Annales Monasterii Sancti Albani*, i. 432–45. For discussion of this source in the context of contemporary ideas of 'taste', see above, 84–5.

[22] The St Albans writer notes that the 'marble stone' of an earlier monk, Nicholas Radcliffe, had been paid for by the abbot in recognition of his zeal against the Wycliffites: ibid. i. 436.

comment on the difference between English-made brasses and the great Flemish ones commissioned by de la Mare. The writer's aesthetic sensibility, in the modern sense, was relatively undeveloped.

For this reason, deeper insights into the commemorative tastes of the monks have to be sought in the evidence of the monuments themselves. Despite the heavy losses, and the fragmentary nature of so many extant memorials, there is sufficient evidence to allow us to identify the main characteristics of the regulars' taste and to see how that taste changed over time.

In one fundamental respect, the memorials of the regulars differed sharply from those of the bishops and cathedral clergy. It was expected of the regulars as an Order that they show humility; their monuments accordingly were to eschew ostentation. To a degree, this quality of reticence was expected of the bishops' memorials, for bishops, like abbots and monks, were God's servants; they were pastors and shepherds; their monuments had to show decorum. Yet bishops also had a dignity to maintain; their monuments had to be worthy of their surroundings. Bishops' monuments accordingly were often large, ornate, and ambitious. From the twelfth century, they were usually in the forefront of fashion. The monuments of monks had to show the reverse of these qualities; they had to show modesty.

Just how the monks sought commemoration varied markedly from Order to Order. At one end of the spectrum were the reformed Orders, the Cistercians prominent among them, who placed a strong emphasis on funerary austerity, while at the other were the Benedictines and Cluniacs, both of whom set store by beauty. In between, and less sharply defined in their commemorative identity, were the Augustinian Canons, a family who tended to avoid extremes (Fig. 42). The two mendicant Orders—the Franciscans and Dominicans—like the Carthusian monks, generally eschewed funerary commemoration altogether.

In terms of abbatial monuments, the Orders most closely associated with the taste for grandeur were the Benedictines and the Cluniacs. The senior abbots or priors of these two families were men who had long shown a taste for fine, eye-catching monuments. In the late twelfth century, when effigial sculpture had first appeared, they had been in the forefront of demand for monuments in the new medium. Along with the episcopate they had commissioned high-quality, state-of-the-art effigies, a few at least in Tournai marble. Among the earliest abbatial effigies to have come down to us are the three now in the cloister at Westminster—those attributed to Abbots Gervase, Laurence, and Crispin—which date from *c.*1160–*c.*1180. At the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries sculpted effigies were being commissioned in many other Benedictine houses. At Sherborne (Dorset) is a fragment of an effigy attributed to Abbot Clement, which dates from *c.*1180. At the beginning of the thirteenth century at Peterborough a series of retrospective effigies of abbots was commissioned as part of a programme of upgrading the abbey's monuments. In some of the larger houses the tradition of commissioning sculpted effigies continued to the end of the Middle Ages. At Gloucester two abbots—Seabroke and Parker—were commemorated by sculpted effigies in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries respectively. The liking of the Benedictine heads

Figure 42. Dorchester Abbey (Oxon.): Abbot John de Sutton (d. 1349)

for sculpted effigies was shared by the heads of some other Orders. An Augustinian prior, Alexander Sutton (d. 1320), was commemorated by a canopied effigy at St Frideswide's, Oxford (now Christ Church Cathedral). Three more Augustinian heads were commemorated by sculpted effigies at St Augustine's Bristol (now Bristol Cathedral) in the late fifteenth century. A prior of Coxford (Norfolk) is probably the subject of a mid-fourteenth-century effigy now at Houghton, whither it was transferred at the Reformation.

In many monasteries, however, there was a switch of patronage in the fourteenth century from effigies in the round to brasses and incised slabs, matching the similar switch of the episcopate (Fig. 42). Even among the abbots of the top Benedictine houses, brasses and slabs won a sizeable slice of the market. Incised slabs were commissioned by at least four abbots of Selby, the mitred heads of an old and distinguished house. At Thornton (Lincs.), there was a similar tradition of commemoration by incised slabs.[23] In the wealthier houses, particularly those in

[23] Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, ii. 1–3.

the east and south-east, brasses generally enjoyed greater popularity than slabs. At St Albans a group of no fewer than seven abbatial brasses graced the presbytery floor. Two of these survive—the famous memorials of Abbot de la Mare (*c*.1360) and Abbot Stokes (d. 1451)—and there is the indent of a third. At Winchester there survives the indent of a magnificent brass to a prior, probably Thomas Silkstede. Most of the other brasses of heads of houses which have come down to us are memorials which were moved to the safety of parish churches at the Reformation. At Cowfold (Sussex) is the magnificent brass of Thomas Neland (d. 1433), prior of Lewes, removed from St Pancras, Lewes, and, on a more modest scale, at Horsham St Faith, that of Prior Geoffrey Langley, removed from the priory close by.[24] In abbeys which became cathedrals or parish churches, there are sometimes extensive series of indents to be seen. At Gloucester there is a fine, but badly worn, series in the north transept, all of fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century date. In the case of Peterborough and a few other abbeys, the physical evidence of the slabs may be supplemented by that of the antiquarian record. For Peterborough, we have the series of drawings of the brasses made for Dugdale shortly before their destruction in the Civil War.[25] The clear impression given by this varied body of evidence is of the continuing richness of Benedictine and Cluniac commemoration in the late Middle Ages. The senior abbots and priors, whether commemorated by sculpted effigies, incised slabs or brasses, looked for a style of commemoration which would attest the dignity of their Orders.

In houses of the Cistercian Order, with its tradition of restraint, abbots were only occasionally commemorated by effigial or semi-effigial monuments before the fourteenth century. According to the statutes of the Order, 'stones placed in the pavement to the memory of the dead . . . should lie level with the ground'. In recognition of this requirement, the most popular commemorative form was for long the simple coffin slab adorned with a cross or, as a mark of status, a crozier.[26] In the thirteenth century, as the range of possibilities for commemoration increased, the Cistercians maintained the simplicity of their practices by patronage of incised slabs. Well-preserved examples of slabs have come down to us in the ruins of Byland, Margam, Tintern, Flaxley, and Meaux. In the later Middle Ages, as burial in the abbey church became more common, the patronage of brasses became common in some of the grander establishments. At Fountains a number of well-preserved indents of canopied brasses of abbots have survived, the most notable being Abbot Swinton's (*c*.1478), which displays below the canopy a mitre, the symbol of his abbatial status.[27] A growing taste for commemoration by brasses

[24] In Cluniac houses, the prior occupied a position equivalent to that of the abbot in other Orders; the only Cluniac abbot was the abbot of Cluny himself.

[25] P. Heseltine, *The Brasses of Huntingdonshire* (Peterborough, 1987), 36–44.

[26] For Cistercian memorials, see L. Butler, 'Cistercian Abbots' Tombs and Abbey Seals', in M. P. Lillich (ed.), *Studies in Cistercian Art and Architecture*, 4 (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1993), 78–87. For an example of a crozier memorial from an Augustinian house, see Fig. 42 above.

[27] G. Coppack, *Fountains Abbey* (London, 1993), 66–7. For the burial places of the abbots of Fountains, see R. Gilyard-Beer, 'The Graves of the Abbots of Fountains', *Yorkshire Archaeological Jnl.* 59 (1987), 45–50.

and incised slabs sat alongside the continuing use of cross slabs—including slabs of alabaster. Among houses of the other reformed Orders the pattern was broadly the same: the patronage of cross slabs and incised effigial slabs coexisting with a growing taste for brasses.

In the late Middle Ages the widening accessibility of commemoration led to the commissioning of memorials either by or for select groups of senior monks. Generally, ordinary brethren were buried not in the church but in a cemetery by the cloister garth. Only those of the community who had held high office or whose lives were marked by personal distinction were accorded the privilege of intra-mural burial. At St Albans virtually all the monuments of monks noted by the fifteenth-century writer were those of obedientiaries. According to the author, these typically took the form of stone or alabaster cross slabs, some of them adorned with inscriptions but others not.[28] By the late fifteenth century brasses had become the most commonly employed form of memorial. Some half-dozen examples survive at St Albans, the finest that of Robert Beauvor, *c*.1455, showing him in a long-sleeved cowl with a hood (Fig. 43).[29] In the cathedral monasteries the memorials of the senior obedientiaries were generally grander in scale than those of the ordinary brethren. At Durham, according to the sixteenth-century *Rites of Durham*, the leading officers of the priory were commemorated by a particularly magnificent series of brasses—all of them unfortunately now lost.[30] At senior administrator level by 1500 there was probably little to distinguish the commemorative style of the monastic cathedrals from that of their secular counterparts. In both types of establishment, dignity was reflected in the commissioning of elaborate memorials incorporating figures of saints associated with the house.

THE PARISH CLERGY

At the end of the thirteenth century, when England's medieval population was nearing its peak, there were some 33,000 secular clergy spread across some 9,500 parishes. In the late fourteenth century, as a consequence of successive plague visitations, there was a sharp decline in numbers, followed in the late fifteenth by a recovery. On the eve of the Reformation it is likely that there were around 26,500

[28] *Annales Monasterii Sancti Albani*, i. 432–45. I am taking the writer's term 'albo lapide' ('white stone') to mean alabaster, but it could conceivably mean clunch. At Westminster, Ralph Selby, a member of the convent from 1398 to 1420, was buried in the church in recognition of his distinction. He had been subdean of York and was a learned jurist: L. E. Tanner and N. H. MacMichael, 'An Indent in Westminster Abbey', *TMBS* 10 (1964–6), 95–6.

[29] N. Rogers, 'Monuments to Monks and Monastic Servants', in B. Thompson (ed.), *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain* (Stamford, 1999), 260–73. For a survey of the St Albans brasses, see W. Page, 'The Brasses and Indents in St Albans Abbey', *Home Counties Magazine*, 1 (1899), 19–25, 140–61, 241–7, 329–32.

[30] W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of County Durham* (London, 2002), 48, 55.

Figure 43. St Albans Cathedral: Robert Beauvor, monk, *c*.1455. Rubbing of brass

clergy in England.[31] Typically, each parish was served by a priest in full orders (known as a rector), a deacon and a subdeacon; at many churches, there might also be a parish clerk to assist the priest in the divine office. The income of the clergy was derived from the so-called spiritualities—that is, from the tithes and glebe land which were attached to the living. Some of the wealthier livings were very valuable. Whalley (Lancs.), perhaps exceptionally, had an income of as much as £200 a year. In 1291, according to the Pope Nicholas 'Taxation', there were over sixty livings worth £100 or more. The majority of benefices, however, were worth far less; in southern England the typical income of a benefice in the late thirteenth

[31] Rigby, *English Society*, 213–15.

century was around £10 per annum. Since a benefice was a financial asset, there was no need for the rector actually to be resident to minister to his flock. Many rectors were absentee, attending university or working in royal or ecclesiastical service. A minority were pluralists, holding more than one benefice by papal dispensation. Where the rector was non-resident, provision would be made for cure of souls to be performed on his behalf by a stipendiary chaplain. In the mid-twelfth century, in the heyday of monastic expansion, a large number of rectories were acquired by newly founded monasteries as endowments. In these cases, the monastery, as corporate rector, appropriated the rights to the greater tithes, while the lesser tithes went to the vicar, who exercised the rector's pastoral responsibilities. In the late Middle Ages there was a further wave of appropriations, as churches were assigned as endowments to the newly established colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. From the late thirteenth century it was common also for those anxious for their souls to establish 'colleges' in the sense of chantry foundations in parish churches. This was a development which had the effect of enhancing liturgical splendour at the same time as deepening pastoral provision in the parish. With the number of chaplains attached to a church increased, it followed that there would be an increase in both the quantity and quality of divine worship.

Before the late fourteenth century the great majority of memorials to parish clergy commemorated rectors of well-endowed churches. Hardly any memorials of early date commemorate vicars, who were necessarily much poorer. The types of memorial favoured by the clergy varied over time and according to locality. Throughout the Middle Ages there was a strong demand for the simple cross slab, either incised or semi-relief. In the east midlands and East Anglia these were often products of the prolific Barnack workshops. The clerical status of the deceased was often indicated by a book or a chalice placed alongside the cross.[32] From the late thirteenth century cross slabs faced strong competition from incised effigial slabs. An isolated example from as early as the twelfth century is the crudely carved slab at Selston (Notts.).[33] In the south-east incised effigial slabs were sometimes of London origin; in the Midlands and north more usually the products of local quarry-based workshops. In the fifteenth century alabaster incised slabs attained wide popularity. A sizeable minority of clerical monuments took the form of sculpted effigies, usually of freestone. An early example is the remarkable effigy, perhaps of twelfth-century date, at Tolpuddle (Dorset). Good examples from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are to be seen at West Walton (Norfolk), Ledbury (Heref.), and Welwick (Yorks.) (Fig. 44). Two of the finest effigies commemorate deacons. These are the early thirteenth-century effigy at Avon Dassett (War.) (Fig. 30) and the figure of Hugh Geboad, *c*.1280, at Rippingale (Lincs.) (Fig. 45). Deacons, although not in full orders, were permitted to exercise cure of souls in parishes.[34] The subjects of

[32] These attributes are very common on slabs in the north of England, less common in the south.

[33] This may date from as early as *c*.1100; see Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, ii, pl. 16b.

[34] The distinctive dress of the deacon was the cassock with, over it, the alb and, over that the dalmatic. Before 1274 deacons were allowed to serve as rectors.

Figure 44. Welwick (Yorks.): a priest, perhaps William de la Mare (d. 1358)

both these monuments were fairly substantial men. Geboad was of gentry stock, while the Avon Dassett clerk was perhaps of knightly descent and connected with the earls of Warwick.[35]

Just as the bishops' and canons' patronage switched to brasses in the late Middle Ages, so too did that of the parochial clergy. Cross slabs in recesses still retained considerable popularity, particularly in the Midlands and north. In the south and east, however, brasses ate very substantially into their market. The reasons for

[35] The Rippingale deacon is identified by an inscription on the book which he holds: 'Hue Geboad the palmer, son of John Geboad, pray for his soul'. The Geboads were lords of Rippingale and other manors in Lincolnshire: C. Moor, *Knights of Edward I* (5 vols., Harleian Soc. 80–4, 1929–32), ii. 121–2. The deacon at Avon Dassett is probably a member of the Giffard family, who held an estate in the village from the earls of Warwick. The last of the line, Andrew, interestingly was a clerk. His date of death—1220—fits nicely with the style of the tomb: *VCH Warwickshire*, v (London, 1949), 67–8.

Figure 45. Rippingale (Lincs.): Hugh Geboad, *c.*1280

the shift of patronage are not hard to find. Brasses were visually attractive; they were easily affordable, a small figure costing no more than two pounds; and, perhaps most important, they did not take up space. As economies of scale in production brought down the cost of commemoration, so the market for clerical monuments expanded at the lower levels. In the fifteenth century vicars were being commemorated regularly. So too were the numerous body of chantry clergy called into being by the endowment of Masses for the dead. Clerical brasses figure prominently in the collegiate churches of Cobham (Kent), Lingfield (Surrey), and Arundel (Sussex). They are thick on the ground in the chapel and cloisters of

Winchester College.[36] The numerous regional workshops which sprang up in the fifteenth century found ready markets for their products in the ranks of the lesser clergy. In East Anglia chalice brasses from the Norwich workshops are among the most commonly encountered of all late medieval memorials.

If the great majority of memorials to parish clergy are of modest size, there is none the less a significant minority which are not. These are memorials conceived on the grand scale, comparable in quality to those of the gentry. From the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the majority are brasses. The brass of John Sleford (d. 1401), rector of Balsham (Cambs.) affords a good example. It consists of a near-life-size figure of the deceased in a cope, with saints in the orphreys, under a rich triple canopy with a marginal inscription surrounding the whole. The near-contemporary brass of Henry Coddington (d. 1404), rector, at Bottesford (Leics.) is similar in scale and design. In the fourteenth century some of the grandest clerical memorials take the form of sculpted monuments. At Welwick (Yorks.) an unidentified priest, possibly William de la Mare, is commemorated by a stone relief effigy under a rich vaulted canopy (Fig. 44).[37] Among effigial incised slabs, the slab of John Merton, *c*.1530, at Whichford (War.) stands out for its splendour and good execution.

How is the richness of this minority of memorials to be explained? A few of the most elaborate examples commemorate clergy of high birth. Laurence Seymour (d. 1337), for example, whose brass at Higham Ferrers is one of the finest of the age, was a scion of a wealthy knightly family which sometimes received summonses to parliament, while William de Kesteven, commemorated by a Flemish brass at North Mimms (Herts.), was actually lord of one of the manors in North Mimms.[38] Some of the grander unidentified sculpted effigies may well commemorate younger sons of the gentry who were appointed by relatives to livings in their gift.

The great majority of the memorials, however, were commissioned by wealthy clerical high-flyers—the civil service mandarins of the day. At the higher administrative levels, the personnel of Church and State overlapped very considerably. Until at least the late fourteenth century the Crown recruited virtually all of its top administrative officials from the ranks of the clergy. The leading officers of state—the chancellor, treasurer, and the keeper of the privy seal—and the staffs of the secretarial offices, the exchequer, and the household departments were all of clerical status. The clerks' reward for their hard work was the prospect of appointment to benefices and prebends in the king's gift. Some of these men became very rich and could afford lavish memorials. John Sleford of Balsham,

[36] Lack, Stuchfield, Whittemore, *Monumental Brasses of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, 337–66.

[37] See above, 158.

[38] Laurence was probably the son of Sir Laurence Seymour (d. 1297), an associate or retainer of Edmund, earl of Lancaster, lord of Higham Ferrers. The Seymours (St Maurs) held lands in Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Northumberland, Rutland, Sussex, and Northamptonshire. The name Laurence ran in the family: Moor, *Knights of Edward I*, iv. 187. William de Kesteven was of armigerous rank: his arms appear at the foot of the brass. He came into possession of his portion of the manor before his appointment to the living: L. E. Tanner, 'Brass at North Mimms Church, Hertfordshire: A Correction', *TMBS* 8 (1943–51), 244–5.

for example, was a career civil servant in Edward III's later years. A member of a Lincolnshire clerical dynasty and probably the brother of William Sleford, clerk of the works at Westminster, he rose through a household department—the great wardrobe—initially serving as clerk to the keeper, and then becoming keeper himself. For some years he held the post in tandem with that of keeper of the privy wardrobe, while in the 1370s he also served as personal chaplain to Queen Philippa.[39] Henry Coddington, commemorated by the brass at Bottesford, was likewise a member of a clerical dynasty, founded by two men of the name John Coddington, of Nottinghamshire stock, both chancery clerks.[40] He himself rose through the ranks of chancery, in 1375 becoming one of the twelve masters.[41]

Other clerks commemorated by elaborate brasses had careers of similar character. William Prestwick (d. 1436), commemorated at Warbleton (Sussex), like Coddington, was a senior chancery clerk, serving from 1424 as clerk of parliament (Fig. 14).[42] John Prophet, dean of York, at Ringwood (Hants), was successively clerk of the king's council, king's secretary, and from 1406 to 1415 keeper of the privy seal.[43] William de Fulbourn (d. 1391), at Fulbourn (Cambs.) was a clerk in the service of Joan, princess of Wales, Richard II's mother.[44] A number of other senior clerks were the servants of magnates. William Ermyn (d. 1401), at Castle Ashby (Northants), was John of Gaunt's receiver general, and later treasurer of Calais, and John Oudeby (d. 1414) at Flamstead (Herts.), treasurer of the earl of Warwick.[45] John Mersdon (d. 1426), at Thurcaston (Leics.), was clerk and executor of the long-lived Elizabeth of Juliers, countess of Kent (Fig. 46), while John Birkhed (d. 1468), commemorated at Harrow, was business manager and executor of Archbishop Chichele.[46] And so the examples can be multiplied.

A number of these men held cathedral or minster prebends in addition to their country rectories. John Sleford, for example, was canon of Ripon, archdeacon of Wells, and prebendary of St Stephen's, Westminster, while William Ermyn was a canon of York Minster and St Paul's; Robert Wintringham, at Cotterstock (Northants), was a canon of Lincoln. It is hardly surprising in the circumstances

[39] T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920–33), iv. 374, 384.

[40] J. L. Grassi, 'Royal Clerks from the Archdiocese of York in the Fourteenth Century', *Northern History*, 5 (1970), 29.

[41] B. Wilkinson, *The Chancery under Edward III* (Manchester, 1929), 66 n., 175, 205.

[42] C. Dawson, *History of Hastings Castle* (2 vols., London, 1909), i. 250, 572.

[43] Tout, *Chapters in Administrative History*, v. 97, 102.

[44] *CPR 1377–81*, 626.

[45] For Ermyn, see TNA: PRO, E403/536, 13 Dec.; R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1265–1603* (London, 1953), 365. He came from a family which had produced a bishop of Norwich earlier in the century: Grassi, 'Royal Clerks from the Archdiocese of York', 13, 27. For John Oudeby, see J. H. Wylie and W. T. Waugh, *The Reign of Henry V* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1914–29), i. 2 n. Oudeby has the arms of the earls of Warwick on his brass; he was Warwick chamberlain of the exchequer.

[46] *Collection of all the Wills of the Kings and Queens of England*, ed. J. Nichols (London, 1780, repr. 1969), 214–15; J. G. Nichols, 'Sepulchral Brasses at Harrow', *Trans. London and Middlesex Archaeological Soc.* 1 (1860), 276–84.

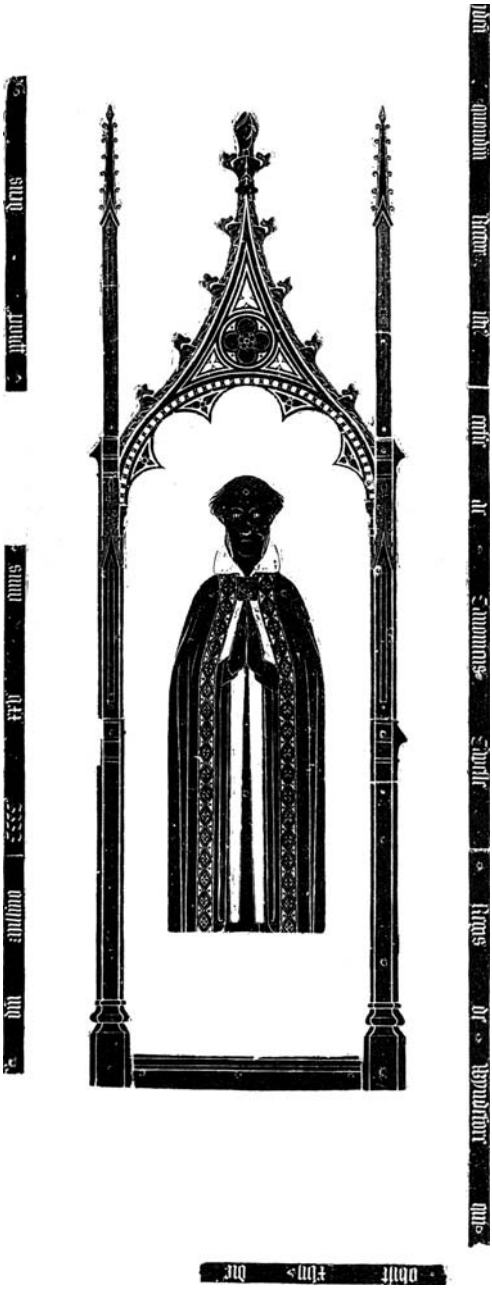

Figure 46. Thurcaston (Leics.): John Mersdon (d. 1426). Rubbing of brass

that these men's memorials bore the influence of cathedral-style commemoration. Yet, despite the opportunities given to them for cathedral burial, they chose interment instead in their parish churches. In the great majority of cases the reason for this was that the commemorated was a benefactor of his church. This is quite clearly the reason why John Sleford chose to be buried at Balsham (Cambs.). On the epitaph of his brass Sleford claimed responsibility for completely rebuilding the church ('ecclesiam struxit'). Whether or not his works were actually as ambitious as he claimed, he seems to have rebuilt the nave and certainly he gave the magnificent stalls.[47] At Great Shelford (Cambs.) Thomas Patesley (d. 1418), a canon of Southwell, took similar pride in his patronage: he claimed to have rebuilt the chancel and tower and to have enriched the church with vestments and furnishings.[48] At Cheshunt (Herts.) Nicholas Dixon (d. 1448), a baron of the exchequer, proclaimed in a series of Latin verses his responsibility for rebuilding the chancel in which he was laid to rest.[49] At Cotterstock (Northants) Robert Wintringham's role in improving the church is attested by his will: he set aside £20 for a set of bells for the tower and a new pavement and roof for the chancel;[50] unsurprisingly, it was at Cotterstock that he was buried.

The attraction to a clerk of burial in a parish church was therefore the opportunity it afforded to take advantage of his good works to elicit prayers for the soul. Not uncommonly, the memorial with its epitaph detailing those works would form one part of a multi-media discourse stretching in characteristic fashion across the church. At Thurcaston (Leics.), as we have seen, the brass of John Mersdon in the chancel was overlooked by the massive east window, which was his gift, at the bottom of one light of which was his kneeling figure with a scroll appealing for prayers.[51] The strategy for eliciting intercession in these prestige cases was carefully planned and comprehensively carried through. If, as was probably the case, the clergy serving a parish church were fewer in number than in a cathedral or minster, the prayers of the parishioners, given in gratitude, would have offered adequate compensation. It is doubtful if Sleford, Patesley, and their kind were endangering their souls by their choice of burial place. Quite possibly, in the balance of gain and loss they reaped some gain.

THE MEMORIALS OF THE GRADUATES

A distinctive group of memorials commemorate the graduates of England's two universities, Oxford and Cambridge. The schools at Oxford were established first,

[47] N. Pevsner, *Cambridgeshire* (2nd edn., Harmondsworth, 1970), 230–1.

[48] H. Haines, A. *Manual of Monumental Brasses* (London, 1861, repr. Bath, 1970), 244.

[49] N. Pevsner, *Hertfordshire* (Harmondsworth, 2nd edn., 1977), 124; for Dixon's career, see R. A. Griffiths, 'Public and Private Bureaucracies in England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century', *Trans. Royal Historical Soc.* 5th ser., 30 (1980), 113.

[50] *Early Lincoln Wills, 1280–1547*, ed. A. Gibbons (Lincoln, 1888), 154–5.

[51] R. Marks, *Stained Glass in England during the Middle Ages* (London, 1993), pl. XXI. And see also above, 139.

in the 1130s, those at Cambridge following three-quarters of a century later. The function of the universities was to provide a trained clerical elite for service in Church and State. The graduates of the schools were normally clerks in holy orders; only in the mid-fifteenth century did a significant lay element make its appearance. The programme of academic study, if pursued to the end, could be lengthy. The Liberal Arts course, which formed what today would be called the undergraduate curriculum, was divided into the 'trivium' (grammar, rhetoric, logic) lasting three years and the 'quadrivium' (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music) lasting another four. By the seventh year a candidate was eligible to supplicate for the degree of Master of Arts, for which he was orally examined. The more ambitious scholars could then begin the exercises leading after five years to the degree of Bachelor of Theology and after two more to the doctorate. By the fourteenth century the establishment of the legal faculties made possible study, normally lasting for four years, for higher degrees in canon and civil law. The colleges of the two universities were founded from the late thirteenth century to provide poor but promising scholars with the financial security which they needed to proceed to the higher degrees. For this reason, they were initially institutions for graduates only. Only in the late fourteenth century, with the foundation of New College, Oxford, did provision begin to be made for undergraduates.

About eighty effigial memorials of university academics survive, the majority of them brasses. Three-quarters of this number are in the university churches and college chapels of Oxford and Cambridge, the remainder scattered across parish churches. The popularity of brasses owed something to their relative economy: they were affordable to a clientele most of whom lived on modest emoluments. Pre-eminently, however, they won favour because they made few claims on space. They made ideal memorials in small college chapels.

The earliest surviving memorial of a graduate in academic dress is actually an incised slab, commemorating Richard Duraunt, MA, *c.*1290, at Dunstable Priory (Beds.). This pre-dates the earliest brass memorials showing clerks in academic attire by over half a century. Duraunt is dressed in what appears to be a sleeved cappa reaching almost to the feet and provided with a small hood which rests around his neck (Fig. 47). The tonsure is prominently displayed. Duraunt was a member of an established Dunstable family. His father was a well-to-do merchant and a benefactor of the priory, known to the monks as 'our friend'. According to the Dunstable Annals, he gave a feast to celebrate the inception of his sons William and Richard as Masters of Arts at Oxford. Nothing is known about Richard's later career, however. It is possible that he died young, and that his father commissioned the memorial to celebrate his attainment of graduate status.[52]

As the number of graduates increased with the establishment of the colleges, so the number of memorials to graduates rose accordingly. By the early fourteenth century brasses as well as incised slabs were being laid to graduates. Most of

[52] Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, i. 120; Badham and Norris, *Early Incised Slabs and Brasses*, 123–5.

Figure 47. Dunstable Priory (Beds.): Richard Duraunt, *c.*1290. Rubbing of slab

these early memorials are now attested only by indents—the largest number being appropriately at Merton College, Oxford, the oldest Oxford college—but one of the Merton brasses still has some of its inlays, that of Richard de Hakebourne (d. 1322), showing him as a half-figure in the head of a cross, in mass vestments (Fig. 13): cross brasses were particularly popular with the Fellows of this well-endowed college. From shortly after the Black Death we have the first extant brass of a college official dressed as a graduate. This is the brass of Robert de Tring, Warden of Merton, who died in 1351. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries brasses were commissioned in great numbers by the Fellows of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges. Today far more examples are to be seen in Oxford than Cambridge, because of the higher rate of destruction in the seventeenth century at Cambridge. Yet there is no doubting the popularity of the medium in both universities. Commemoration by a brass in the college chapel became something of a fashion in the two academic communities.

By the fifteenth century, as graduates were appointed in increasing number to benefices, so brasses to graduates become more common outside the universities. A good early example is provided by the fine half-effigy of John Hotham, Provost of Queen's, at Chinnor (Oxon.) of 1361.[53] Good later examples are provided by the brasses of Philip Worthyn (d. 1488) at Blockley (Glos.) and Arthur Vernon (d. 1517) at Tong (Salop).

Before the Black Death graduates had hardly, if ever, been shown wearing the distinctive attire of their estate. Typically, as in Hakebourne's case, they had been shown in the eucharistic vestments in which most parish clergy were shown vested on their memorials. After the Black Death, however, habits of attire changed. Graduates were now more commonly shown in the habit appropriate to their degree. In 1448 Reginald Mertherderwa, rector of Creed (Cornwall), asked to be shown in 'the insignia of a doctor of laws' on his brass in St Frideswide's Priory, Oxford.[54] In the chapels of the two universities other academics were depicted in the cappa clausa and pileus for Doctors; the cappa nigra (Oxford) or cappa manicata (Cambridge) with hood for Masters of Arts; the cappa clausa with two slits for Bachelors of Divinity; and the sleeved tabard for Bachelors of Civil Law and BAs. The reason for the shift of preference is probably to be found in the tendency, as inscriptions became longer, for details of degrees to be included. Since a university degree was a mark of status, and memorials were witnesses to status, it made sense for the person commemorated to be shown in clothing appropriate to his standing. For the graduate community, as for almost every other patron, memorials were no less significant as markers of status than as prompts to prayerful intercession.

[53] Emden, *Biographical Register*, ii. 969–70

[54] *Cornish Wills, 1342–1540*, ed. N. Orme (Devon and Cornwall Rec. Soc., NS 50, 2007), 76. Mertherderwa was a non-resident rector, living in Oxford, where he was Principal of Bull Hall: Emden, *Biographical Register*, ii. 1266–7. For the likely indent of his brass, see J. Bertram, 'The Lost Brasses of Oxford', *TMBS* 11 (1973), 327, 328.

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CLERICAL ESTATE

The memorials of the clergy rank among the grandest monuments of the Middle Ages to have come down to us. Some, such as Archbishop Gray's monument at York, are magnificent examples of the sculptor's art. They attest the close interest which the clergy took in commemoration in appropriate style.

A notable feature of the more ornate memorials is their lavish resort to religious imagery. Usually this imagery is accommodated in the subsidiary sculpture flanking the main figure. On the tombs of bishops and abbots, saints associated with the deceased's cathedral or abbatial church were often included. On Bishop Northwold's monument at Ely, for example, the figures of St Etheldreda and St Edmund were both shown in the side niches. On the brasses of cathedral dignitaries, sometimes even of parish clergy, the patron saints of the deceased were sometimes represented in the buttresses of canopies. On brasses on which the deceased was shown in processional vestments, patron saints might be shown in the orphreys of the cope. Resurrection imagery also figured prominently on clerical memorials, long before it became common on monuments of the laity. On his Tournai marble slab in Ely Cathedral, *c*.1170, Bishop Nigel's soul was shown as a diminutive figure borne aloft to the heavenly city by the Archangel Michael. On the grandest late medieval clerical brasses a depiction of the soul being raised aloft was often included in the upper reaches of the canopy, reflecting a reading of the memorial from lower to upper, from earthly to heavenly.

An interest in religious imagery is perhaps only to be expected on the memorials of those whose lives were dedicated to religion and framed by the institutions of religion. Yet the iconographic distinctiveness of the memorials of the clergy goes well beyond that. What is noticeable on the richer clerical memorials is the interest shown in the depiction of liturgical celebration. On a semi-relief slab commemorating a rector, perhaps John de la Warde, at Newton Regis (War.), *c*.1330, a particularly complex scene was represented (Fig. 48). In the centre, in a large trefoil supported by a shaft, is the half-figure of the deceased with, on the one side, a chalice and, on the other, a book, while, flanking the canopy above, are two angels swinging thuribles, serenading the soul as it is lifted heavenwards by two other angels, with the dove, for the Holy Spirit, looking on. Below the trefoil, on each side of the shaft, are the kneeling figures of two acolytes bearing tapers, and at the foot of the shaft is the Agnus Dei. Elements of both earthly and heavenly celebration are brought together in this complex design. References to the eucharist at the bottom provide a foil to depiction of the resurrection of the soul above. The liturgical theme of the monument is reinforced by its location on the north side of the altar where in Holy Week it would have served as a receptacle for the Easter Sepulchre.

Equally striking is the choice of imagery on a fine incised slab commemorating John Lawe, *c*.1480, subdean of the collegiate church of All Saints, at All Saints,

Figure 48. Newton Regis (War.): a priest, perhaps John de la Warde, *c*.1330

Derby (now Derby Cathedral).[55] In this case it appears that a funeral entourage was represented. At the top of the canopy shafts are two figures, one with wings, presumably an angel, the other in an alb and biretta, while in the buttresses below is a procession of figures—one, on the dexter side, in an alb and biretta, one wearing a cappa, the usual outer garment for college clergy in winter, and holding a covered ciborium, and the final two in lay dress. The notion that the 'weeper' figures in canopies represent mourners at a funeral is a fairly common one on French and German memorials of the Middle Ages, but is less often encountered in England. In these two striking examples, the memorial, a focus for the liturgy of remembrance, is made an actual vehicle for the representation of that liturgy. On the grander late medieval clerical memorials, the liturgical dimension is far more highly developed than on the monuments of the laity.

For the clergy, no less than for the laity, monuments performed the two main functions of prompting intercessory prayer and providing a witness to status. A clerk, no less than a knight or a civilian, wanted to combine remembrance in prayer with the honouring of his standing in the world. Yet in the case of clerical monuments there was a strong sense in which it was less the individual alone who was commemorated than the clerical estate as a whole. For a clerk, a

[55] Illustrated in Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, ii, pl. 19a.

monument provided visible witness to the separateness and distinction of the clergy as the first of the divinely ordained estates. The monuments of the clergy provide eloquent evidence of the generally collective nature of medieval commemoration. The identity of a clerk on his tomb was constructed in such a way as to present him as a member of a series of overlapping clerical communities. The first such community was typically the one which he served or to which he belonged—his cathedral or see in the case of a bishop, his monastic house in the case of a regular, a cathedral or college in the case of a canon, or the body of the learned in that of the academics. The larger community, and the one into which these local identities were subsumed, was that of the clerical estate as a whole. This larger identity was indicated principally through the medium of attire, though on early cross slabs it might also be represented by such devices as a book or the chalice, the symbol of the eucharist. If the monuments of the clergy were in many cases memorials of considerable complexity then, it was for good reason. Their rich and allusive imagery not only encouraged the offering of prayers for the deceased; it also drew attention to the deceased's membership of the estate which mediated between God and Man.

9

Military Effigies

The image of the armed and mounted knight is one of the most evocative to have come down to us from the Middle Ages. In manuscripts and on seals it gave vivid expression to the knight's role in the threefold ordering of society—that of defending the other two estates, the clergy and the labourers. On tombs and brasses, the counterpart of the image of the mounted knight was that of the recumbent knight—usually the knight at prayer. As a monumental form, the knightly effigy survived long after knighthood itself was drained of military reality.

On the Continent, effigies of aristocratic laity came into use a decade or two before they did in England. The earliest European effigial lay monuments all commemorate royal or princely rulers. At Leon in Spain are two fine incised slabs to members of the royal house of Castile dating from *c*.1060–1100. At Merseburg, Germany, there is the remarkable cast-bronze figure of Rudolf, duke of Swabia (*c*.1080–1100). On all three memorials the commemorated is shown attired in princely robes.[1] On one extant English effigy of the later twelfth century an aristocrat is shown similarly attired, that of Aubrey de Vere, formerly at Colne Priory and now at Bures (Essex).[2] Effigies of laymen in armour were introduced around the beginning of the thirteenth century. One of the earliest, from perhaps *c*.1210, is that of a simply attired knight, without surcoat, at Niort (Deux-Sèvres, France). Also of early date, but of finer quality, is the effigy of a knight of the Montchâlons family at St Martin's, Laon. Other early French knightly effigies, virtually all now lost, are illustrated in Gaignières' drawings.[3]

In England the series of secular military effigies begins in the second or third decades of the thirteenth century.[4] Assigning exact dates to these effigies, which rarely preserve their inscriptions, is notoriously difficult. At best, only the main stages in the growth of the secular effigial market can be picked out. Among the

[1] For the Leon effigies, see Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, ii, pl. 100. For Merseburg, see T. E. A. Dale, 'The Individual, the Resurrected Body and Romanesque Portraiture: The Tomb of Rudolf von Schwaben at Merseburg', *Speculum*, 77 (2002), 707–43. Dale offers a date of *c*.1080–1100 for the effigy.

[2] For this effigy, see above, 32. The fact that Aubrey is shown robed indicates a princely model for the effigy.

[3] K. Bauch, *Das Mittelalterliche Grabbild: Figürliche Grabmaler des 11. bis 15. Jahrhunderts in Europa* (Berlin and New York, 1976), 57, 120–3; *Les Tombeaux de la Collection Gaignières*, ed. J. Adhémar (2 vols., Paris, 1974, 1976), nos. 51, 60, 140, 141, 158.

[4] For a survey of 13th-cent. knightly effigies, see H. A. Tummers, *Early Secular Effigies in England: The Thirteenth Century* (Leiden, 1980).

earliest extant effigies are those attributed to the Marshal earls of Pembroke in the Temple Church, London, which probably date from the 1230s. Of roughly the same date is the fine effigy of William Longespée the elder, earl of Salisbury, in Salisbury Cathedral (Fig. 20). Effigies of armed men become more numerous after *c.*1270. The market was by this time expanding to include members of the ordinary knightly class as well as the baronage. Many of these early effigies were placed in monastic or mendicant houses to the memory of knights who had granted land to the houses in return for burial.[5] By the later years of the century, knightly effigies were also appearing in considerable number in parish churches. Fine Purbeck marble or freestone effigies of knights survive at Tickenham (Som.), Threekingham (Lincs.), and Stowe Nine Churches (Northants).[6] Excellent early examples of incised slabs to knights are to be seen at Sollers Hope and Bromyard (both Heref.). The surge in the production of secular effigies by the end of the century attests the extension of patronage to the increasingly self-conscious knightly or gentry class.

The rapid dissemination of the military effigy owed something to its easy availability. In the first half of the thirteenth century figures of knights were being produced in some number for use as statues on cathedral façades. These figures were remarkably similar to those produced for tomb effigies, the same models being used for both. In 1912 Prior and Gardner drew attention to the stylistic parallels between the armed figures on the Wells front and West Country effigies of similar date.[7] Both they and, later, A. C. Fryer suggested that both classes of figure were products of the same school of sculptors.[8] Their arguments have been found wanting on points of detail. None the less, it is clear that some at least of the tomb effigies were the work of the Wells sculptors.[9] Such a crossover of expertise is, indeed, only to be expected; the mailed effigy of the knight was simply the façade figure laid on its back.

[5] A fine series of effigies survives at Furness Abbey (Cumbria): S. Harrison and others, *Furness Abbey* (London, 1998), 21.

[6] For county surveys of early knightly effigies, see P. B. Chatwin, 'Monumental Effigies in the County of Warwick', *Trans. Birmingham Archaeological Soc.* 47 (1921), 35–88; C. Hunter Blair, 'Medieval Effigies in the County of Durham', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th ser. 6 (1929), 1–51; idem, 'Medieval Effigies in Northumberland', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th ser. 7 (1930), 1–32; S. A. Jeavons, 'The Monumental Effigies of Staffordshire, Part I', *Trans. Birmingham Archaeological Soc.* 69 (1951), 1–27; R. H. Lawrence and T. E. Routh, 'Military Effigies in Nottinghamshire before the Black Death', *Trans. Thoroton Soc.* 28 (1924), 114–37; R. H. Lawrence and T. E. Routh, 'The Military Effigies of Derbyshire', *Jnl. Derbyshire Archaeological and Natural History Soc.* 46 (1924–5), 92–105; M. Downing, 'Medieval Military Effigies up to 1500 remaining in Worcestershire', *Trans. Worcestershire Archaeological Soc.*, 3rd ser. 18 (2002), 133–209.

[7] E. S. Prior and A. Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure-Sculpture in England* (Cambridge, 1912), 606–8.

[8] A. C. Fryer, 'Monumental Effigies made by Bristol Craftsmen (1240–1550)', *Archaeologia*, 74 (1924), 1–72.

[9] For criticism, see B. and M. Gittos, 'Alfred Fryer's "Monumental Effigies by Bristol Craftsmen": A Reassessment', in L. Keen (ed.), *'Almost the Richest City'* (BAA Conference Transactions, 19, 1997), 88–96.

Knightly effigies rank among the finest medieval memorials to have come down to us. Even on routine products, the standard of craftsmanship was often high, with details meticulously picked out and drapery folds naturalistically represented. Between the early thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries stages in the development of armour can be traced in some detail.[10] The earliest monuments show the commemorated in the mail hawberk, which had formed the foundation of bodily defence since before the Norman Conquest. Over the hawberk, from the twelfth century, was worn a linen gown, which reached to below the knees and was open in front and back below the waist. From the early fourteenth century monuments record the addition to the harness of reinforcements of boiled leather and plate. On the brass of Sir William Fitzralph (*c*.1335) at Pebmarsh (Essex) the mail hawberk is supplemented by metal plates strapped onto the front of the legs and feet and on the sides of the arms, with extra plates or leather reinforcements protecting the elbow joints and shoulders. In the next generation the bacinet, a close-fitting pointed helmet, was introduced, from which hung a mail defence for the shoulders and neck, known as the aventail. By the mid-fourteenth century the gown, already shortened by the 1340s, was entirely replaced by the 'jupon' shown on innumerable effigies of the reigns of Edward III and Richard II, while the rest of the body was encased in plate.[11] In the same period, the sword belt was simplified and shortened, allowing the sword more easily to hang on the knight's left side. In the fifteenth century the main changes to the harness focused on the elaboration and strengthening of the plate armour. The aventail was replaced by the plate metal gorget; additional defences were provided for the shoulders and arms; and extra plates were attached to the 'skirt'. This series of changes can be traced in effigies produced between the mid-thirteenth century and the early sixteenth. Among the most notable of these are the copper alloy effigy of the Black Prince (d. 1376) at Canterbury, the brasses of the two d'Abernon knights at Stoke d'Abernon (Surrey), and the alabaster effigies of Ralph Green esquire (d. 1417) (Fig. 11), Sir Reginald Cobham (d. 1446) at Lingfield, and George, Lord Roos (d. 1513) in St George's Chapel, Windsor. In a class entirely on its own is the magnificent effigy (*c*.1448–53) of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick (d. 1439), at St Mary's, Warwick. The quality of execution of this figure is such that the armour worn can immediately be recognized as a product of the armourers of Milan.[12] Even the most insignificant details of the armour are faithfully reproduced—the holes in the breastplate by which the lance rest was fixed, the small ventilation holes in the armpit gussets, and the straps and buckles by which the cuirass and placates were fastened (Fig. 22). It is reasonable to suppose that the craftsmen executing the figure had an actual suit of the armour in the workshop to work from as their template.

[10] For changes in armour, see C. Blair, *European Armour* (London, 1958).

[11] The 'jupon' was a tight-fitting garment thought to have been of leather (but there are problems with the contemporary terminology); plate armour of some sort was worn under it.

[12] Chatwin, 'Monumental Effigies in the County of Warwick', 60–5.

For all the technical proficiency of effigies such as Beauchamp's, it is important to recognize that the depiction of armour on monuments was heavily influenced by artistic convention. Monumental effigies of all types, but especially brasses, were produced to formalized designs. While workshop managers would update the patterns at regular intervals, these could still be old-fashioned in relation to styles in contemporary use. The point can be illustrated by reference to the earliest knightly brasses, in particular those of the 'Camoys' series. Not one of these early fourteenth-century brasses shows any plate armour beyond the knee defences; yet it can be demonstrated from documentary evidence that plate defences for the body, arm, and leg had been in use for at least a generation.[13] It is also noticeable that the varieties of types of armour shown on tomb effigies are more limited than in manuscript illuminations and in other media. A richer repertory of armour, for example, is shown on the Easter Sepulchres at Heckington (Lincs.) (*c*.1340) and Northwold (Norfolk) (*c*.1380) than on any contemporary brass or relief effigy. The tendency to homogeneity in representation became more pronounced in the later fourteenth century with the introduction, under the influence of the alabasterers, of an almost standard form of military effigy. Contemporary continental monuments, by comparison, were much less standardized. On the richer monuments of late medieval France and Germany armour was often more distinctively and naturalistically represented. For sheer realism, not even the magnificent brass of Sir Thomas Boleyn (d. 1538) at Hever (Kent) can bear comparison with its near-contemporary, that of Duke Albrecht of Saxony at Meissen.

THE KNIGHTLY MONUMENT AND CHIVALRY

The heyday of the knightly effigy in England coincided with the period of national military achievement in the Hundred Years War (1337–1453). In the twenty years between 1340 and 1360 the long experience of setback and defeat which the English had suffered in Scotland gave way, under Edward III, to a run of victories over the French which restored English prestige and self-confidence. In 1360 the first, closely fought, phase of the War was brought to an end by the settlement made between the two sides at Brétigny. After a lull in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the struggle was renewed in 1415 by the Lancastrian Henry V. Between 1417 and 1420 Henry undertook the systematic conquest of Normandy, securing recognition of his right to the French crown in the treaty of Troyes. In the end the English were to be expelled from all of their possessions in France except Calais and its march. As late as the 1430s, however, English commanders were still fighting successful rearguard campaigns and taking considerable profits from ransoms.

A notable feature of the experience of the Hundred Years War was the penetration of aristocratic religion by the rituals and ceremonies of chivalry. Perhaps the most

[13] C. Blair, 'Armour and the Study of Brasses', in J. Bertram (ed.), *Monumental Brasses as Art and History* (Stroud, 1996), 38.

remarkable expression of this was the foundation in *c.*1348 of the Order of the Garter, with its institutionalized link with St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. The overlay of piety with chivalric ritual, however, was to be a characteristic of English military and aristocratic society more generally. As Malcolm Vale has shown, it was common at aristocratic funerals for horses to be brought into church and paraded down the nave, bearing the deceased knight's arms and armour.[14] In many parts of England, particularly the north, monasteries were turned into repositories of the battle trophies of the nobility. Yet, for all the evidence of chivalric influence on funerary culture, the suggestion has been made that on knightly monuments little allusion was made to the fighting careers of the commemorated. It is argued that active and non-active knights were commemorated by the same types of effigy, and that no specific iconography was developed to honour military achievement.[15] To some extent, it is allowed, an exception should be made for inscriptions. On a number of late-medieval epitaphs reference is made to military office or command. In 1406 on an inscription at Stoke sub Hamdon (Som.) tribute was paid to Sir Matthew Gourney's tenure of the stewardship of Landes and captaincy of Château Daques, and to his involvement in the victories at Crécy, Poitiers, and Najera.[16] Forty years later, on Sir John Cressy's tomb at Dodford (Northants) reference was made to his captaincy of the castles of Lisieux, Orbec, and Pont-l'Évêque in Normandy and his employment as a member of the king's French council (Fig. 77).[17] In 1462 on a remarkable epitaph at Tideswell (Derby.) Sir Sampson Meverell's lengthy career in arms was recited—his service to John (*rectius* Thomas) Montagu, earl of Salisbury, 'the which ordained the said Sampson to be a captain of divers worshipful places in France', his transfer on Salisbury's death to the service of the duke of Bedford, and his presence at no fewer than eleven battles in France in two years. These are all epitaphs which attest the deceased's pride in military achievement. On the tombs of a great many other captains, however, no reference at all was made to achievements on campaign. Sir William le Moigne's distinguished career in arms in the middle years of the fourteenth century went entirely without mention on his brass of 1404 at Sawtry (Hunts.).

The case for lack of specific iconographic reference can be taken further. In the visual and literary art of the period considerable importance was attached to the warhorse. In the most famous representation of an English knight of this period, in the Luttrell Psalter (*c.*1320–40), Sir Geoffrey Luttrell of Irnham (Lincs.) is shown astride his destrier, receiving his arms from his wife and daughter as he prepares

[14] M. G. A. Vale, *Piety, Charity and Literacy among the Yorkshire Gentry, 1370–1480* (York: Borthwick Papers, 50, 1976), 11–12; J. and M. Vale, 'Knightly Codes and Piety', in N. E. Saul (ed.), *Age of Chivalry: Art and Society in Late Medieval England* (London, 1992), 24–35.

[15] B. Kemp, 'English Church Monuments during the Period of the Hundred Years War', in A. Curry and M. Hughes (eds.), *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War* (Woodbridge, 1994), 195–211.

[16] The monument, now lost, was recorded by John Leland: *The Itinerary of John Leland*, i. 159.

[17] For Cressy's career, see J. C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament, 1439–1509* (2 vols., London, 1936), ii. 235–6; M. Jones and S. Walker (eds.), 'Private Indentures for Life Service in Peace and War, 1279–1476', *Camden Miscellany*, XXXII (Camden Society, 5th ser. 3, 1994), 148–9.

to depart on campaign. In a series of tableaux in a near-contemporary manuscript, *The Romance of Alexander*, the battle scenes are replete with images of knights charging into battle on mighty warhorses. In a late fourteenth-century version of the alliterative *Morte Arthure* the battle narratives concentrate almost exclusively on the feats of arms of knights on horseback. On the armorial seals of the greater magnates, the owner of the seal was shown on the obverse astride a warhorse. Two of England's greatest comital lines, the Montagus and the Beauchamps, affirmed their chivalric credentials through the use of such seals.[18]

To this background, it may appear strange that the image of the mounted knight figures so little in contemporary funerary sculpture. The number of monuments on which the warhorse is represented amounts to no more than a handful.[19] The most celebrated is the monument in Exeter Cathedral of Sir Richard de Stapeldon (d. 1332). Sir Richard is shown cross-legged, leaning over to draw the sword from his scabbard, with an esquire at the foot clad in tunic and hose holding the reins of his master's horse.[20] Roughly contemporary is a monument at Old Somerby (Lincs.) on which a similar scene is represented: the saddled horse is made to provide a rest for the knight's feet, while a faithful esquire holding the reins crouches close by (Fig. 49).[21] On a third monument, at Minster in Sheppey (Kent), the horse is shown alongside, not at the foot of, the knight's effigy, though an esquire still holds the reins.[22] On a couple of other monuments horse imagery plays a subordinate role in the composition. On the great monuments in Westminster Abbey of Earl Edmund of Lancaster (d. 1296) and Earl Aymer de Valence (d. 1324) the commemorated is shown on horseback in the trefoil in the canopy gable, in Aymer's case galloping ahead on his charger and in his kinsman's case, riding at a slow canter, gazing heavenwards (Fig. 32). In a stained glass window of *c*.1330–40 at Drayton Basset (Staffs.), now lost but recorded by Dugdale, there were striking echoes of these images. An armed man, probably Ralph, Lord Basset, was shown receiving a plumed helm from his wife with, behind him, a groom holding the reins of his horse. The subject matter and design of the window relate it closely to the arming scene in the contemporary Luttrell Psalter. Quite possibly, it formed a counterpart to a monument in the church, also now lost, on which a groom and

[18] A. Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses: Military Service and the English Aristocracy under Edward III* (Woodbridge, 1994), 28–9.

[19] For a survey, see R. Marks, 'Sir Geoffrey Luttrell and some Companions: Images of Chivalry *c*.1320–50', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 46–7 (Vienna, 1993–4), 343–55.

[20] Stapeldon was brother of Walter, the bishop of Exeter. For his career, see C. Moor, *Knights of Edward I* (Harleian Soc. 80–4, 1929–32), iv. 277.

[21] The monument, the significance of which has not previously been noticed, commemorates a member of the Sleyt family. Holles, in the early 17th cent., noted the arms on the shield (now lost) as *(Or) a chevron between 10 crosses botonny (sable)*, which are the arms of Sleyt, and the Sleyts held a manor in the village (*Lincs. Church Notes*, 201; *Dictionary of British Arms: Medieval Ordinary*, ii, ed. T. Woodcock, J. Grant, I. Graham (London, 1996), 328).

[22] The monument probably commemorates Sir Robert de Shurland, a veteran of the Scottish wars of Edward I and Edward II: Moor, *Knights of Edward I*, iv. 249; TNA: PRO, C67/15, mm. 1, 8; C67/16, mm. 2, 10. On these monuments the presence of the horse and esquire may refer to the funeral procession in which the horse was taken into the church.

Figure 49. Old Somerby (Lincs.): a knight of the Sleyt family, *c*.1310–30: horse and esquire at feet of effigy

horse were represented. On two earlier monuments the image of the armed man on horseback was included in the iconography of the tomb. At Hampstead Norris (Berks.) is a carved stone panel in low relief of a helmed knight with couched lance galloping on horseback (late thirteenth century), which appears to have formed part of a tapering coffin slab.[23] At Orton-on-the-Hill (Leics.) is a smaller, perhaps later, carving of a knight on horseback, brandishing a sword, at the head end of a similar tapering slab.[24]

This group of images, some on monuments, some in related media, amount to scarcely more than half a dozen examples at most. Even allowing for losses, they hardly give the impression of the image of the warhorse figuring prominently in English medieval funerary sculpture. It is particularly striking that they all come

[23] N. Pevsner, *Berkshire* (Harmondsworth, 1966), 151 and pl. 15.

[24] Illustrated in J. Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* (4 vols. in 8, London, 1795–1815), iv. 845. The artistic affinities of the piece are with the early 14th-cent. monuments in Westminster Abbey.

from a fairly short period, roughly the eighty years from *c*.1270 to *c*.1350. In the century after the Black Death the image of the warhorse disappears altogether from English funerary art.

In Europe south of the Alps, however, the iconographic tradition was very different. In northern Italy, in particular, the warhorse figured with some prominence in funerary sculpture. Among the *signori* of the Italian cities a fashion developed for big, free-standing monuments showing them in equestrian pose.[25] The most famous of these are the monuments to the della Scala at Verona (Fig. 50). On the monument of Cangrande (d. 1329) the armoured figure of the commemorated sits astride a caparisoned warhorse on top of a tall sarcophagus, the knight's sword thrust upwards and his crested helmet over his shoulder. The monuments of two later lords, Mastino II and Cansignorio, are still

Figure 50. Verona, Italy: Cangrande della Scala (d. 1329)

[25] For equestrian monuments, see E. Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture* (London and New York, 1964), 83–5; and for examples from Bologna, R. Grandi, *I Monumenti dei Dotori e la Scultura a Bologna (1267–1348)* (Bologna, 1982), pl. 23, 101.

larger, Cansignorio's being crowned with a shrine-like confection of aedicules and pinnacles supporting the statue.[26] Monuments of this sort became common in the late fourteenth century. In S. Giovanni in Conca, Milan, the Milanese tyrant Bernabò Visconti (d. 1385) was commemorated by a massive monument placed immediately behind the high altar, so as to be visible to the congregation in the nave.[27] In the early fifteenth century the *condottiere* Paolo Savelli was honoured by a smaller, somewhat more fitting, composition in the Frari church, Venice. In the Duomo, Florence, two mural tablets show the commemorated in profile on horseback—Uccello's retrospective tribute of 1436 to the English captain Sir John Hawkwood and del Castagno's tablet of the late 1440s to Niccolò da Tolentino.

A handful of examples of equestrian monuments are to be found outside Italy. In Germany there are the two enigmatic 'rider' figures in the cathedrals at Bamberg and Magdeburg, while in France there is the monument at Rouen to Louis de Brézé (d. 1531), seneschal of Normandy, showing him armed on horseback above a sarcophagus.

In medieval England there is no counterpart to these monuments. On no medieval English tomb, not even that of Stapeldon at Exeter, is the horse accorded such prominence as on contemporary continental memorials. Yet in England in the later Middle Ages the horse was the pre-eminent symbol of power and prestige. In war and at tournaments the knight's destrier was the most visible mark of aristocratic status. At funerals warhorses were paraded bearing the deceased's arms and armour. How is the relative neglect of horse imagery on monuments to be explained?

Part of the answer may be found in the very different commemorative traditions of England (and northern Europe) and Italy. In Italy the medieval tradition of equestrian commemoration owed much to the equestrian monuments of Antiquity, in particular the statue of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius in Rome. Moreover, in Italy the Christian habits of commemoration were grafted onto a far older tradition, inherited from Antiquity, of the public and civic honouring of great men. In England, by contrast, the classical tradition counted for much less. Within a century or two of the departure of the legions, the memory of Roman civilization was largely gone. However, there was a second reason for the neglect of the horse, and that was the sheer authority of the recumbent effigy. Recumbent figures had quickly established for themselves a position of dominance in commemorative art following their introduction in the twelfth century. They fitted easily into the Christian liturgical context, representing the commemorated at rest, awaiting the call of the Resurrection. Their purpose was essentially religious, not secular. Moreover, there was a very practical point: they fitted easily onto the tops of grave slabs. Once established as the dominant commemorative genre, recumbent effigies faced little competition. Rival commemorative forms never gained so much as a foothold in the market.

[26] Bauch, *Das Mittelalterliche Grabbild*, 190–6.
[27] The monument is now in the Sforza Castle Museum, Milan.

CHIVALRIC ICONOGRAPHY ON MONUMENTS

Given the strength of the established commemorative tradition in the north, the absence of horse imagery is perhaps understandable. What is more puzzling is that on monuments military imagery in general should apparently have figured so little. The century from 1340 to 1440, the period of the Hundred Years War, was one of the most successful in English military history. Military imagery figured regularly in poetry and political literature. Funerary armour was regularly paraded at the obsequies of deceased knights. To this background, can it really have been the case that military imagery figured so little in monumental art?

While it is true that a specific iconography of war was never developed in England, military imagery was actually more widespread on tombs than sometimes supposed. It found expression in a variety of forms—in the emblematic language of heraldry, in visual and other references to tourneying activity, and in the iconography of the Order of the Garter.

The tomb on which military imagery most obviously figures is the brass of Sir Hugh Hastings at Elsing (Norfolk). This celebrated memorial, unparalleled in its richness, ranks among the finest to a layman of the period (Fig. 51).[28] Sir Hugh is shown in armour of mixed mail and plate, covered above the thighs by a surcoat emblazoned with the Hastings arms. Above his head rises a canopy supported on side shafts with small figures of weepers drawn from his relatives and friends. In the central oculus of the canopy is a representation of St George triumphing over the dragon while, below, Hugh's soul is shown lifted heavenwards by angels. Projecting vertically from the sides of the canopy pediment are tabernacles containing a two-stage representation of the Coronation of the Virgin. The monument is a composition of great complexity, conveying important and related messages—the triumph of the Christian faith over death and the triumph of the English in arms over the French. The first message, that of triumph over death, is conveyed principally by the iconography in the upper half of the brass, where Hugh's soul is seen making the ascent from earth to heaven; the second, that of earthly triumph, is conveyed by the figures in the side shafts, whose ranks include some of the men whom Hugh had fought alongside. Hugh's career as a soldier had been distinguished but relatively brief.[29] He had served his apprenticeship in the wars in Scotland between 1335 and 1338, later serving in Brittany under his younger half-brother Laurence Hastings, earl of Pembroke. In 1345, under Laurence's command again, he had joined Henry of Grosmont's expedition to Aquitaine. In 1347 he had served with Warwick and others at the siege of Calais, dying of dysentery contracted at the siege. This group of men, his principal companions in arms, are represented in the side shafts of the canopy. Henry of Grosmont, under whom he had fought in Aquitaine, is shown in the

[28] The best discussion of the brass is M. W. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials* (London, 1977), i. 18–19.

[29] For his career, see *ODNB* 25. 764–5 (by A. Ayton).

Figure 51. Elsing (Norfolk): Sir Hugh Hastings (d. 1347). Rubbing of brass

uppermost niche on the sinister side. Immediately below his figure was that, now lost, of Laurence Hastings, his half-brother. On the dexter side in the uppermost position is Edward III himself, Hugh's sovereign and patron. Beneath Edward is the earl of Warwick, Thomas Beauchamp, alongside whom he had fought at Calais. In the lower tiers of the shafts are other commanders whom Hugh would have known on campaign—Ralph, Lord Stafford, Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin, and Sir Aymer St Amand.[30] This carefully selected group attests the involvement in the memorial's design of someone with intimate knowledge of Hugh's career. That person is most likely to have been Hugh's chief executor, Henry of Grosmont himself. Henry can be seen not only as commemorating one of his most trusted lieutenants, but also honouring the solidarity and pride in achievement of a generation of English knighthood.

Equally expressive of the martial pride of English knighthood is the heraldic scheme on another mid-fourteenth-century tomb—that of Reginald, Lord Cobham (d. 1361), at Lingfield (Surrey). Reginald was one of Edward III's leading companions and commanders. He had begun his career in the 1330s fighting in Scotland against David Bruce and his supporters. On the opening of the European hostilities in 1338, he took part in fighting first in the Low Countries and later in Brittany. In 1346 he accompanied the king on the expedition to Normandy which culminated in the victory at Crécy. In the following year he was present at the siege of Calais. On the renewal of the war in the 1350s he enlisted with the Black Prince for service in Aquitaine, and in September 1356 was present at the prince's great victory at Poitiers. In 1359, by now approaching 60, he enlisted for what was to be his last expedition, the assault on the city of Reims. The campaign ended inconclusively, and the king was forced to negotiate a treaty with the French. In the following year—providentially—Reginald died, perhaps a victim of the plague.

Reginald's career in service is recorded on the armorial on his tomb as vividly as Hugh Hastings's in the side shafts of his own memorial (Fig. 52). In the position of honour, at the head of the tomb, are Reginald's own arms and those of his wife's family, the Berkeleys. Reginald and the Berkeleys had been brought into contact by the ties of military companionship and by their employment on royal business. On the southern side of the tomb are the arms of a group of lords with whom Reginald had fought on campaign. From the west, these are: Roger Mortimer, earl of March; William de Bohun, earl of Northampton; John de Vere, earl of Oxford; and Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh. Of the group, the two men with closest ties with Reginald were probably Burghersh and Oxford. Burghersh was a scion of a court-based family whose lands, like Cobham's, lay mainly in the south-east of England, while Oxford was the holder of one of England's oldest comital titles. William de Bohun, earl of Northampton, whose arms appear too, was another of Edward III's commanders, and a close associate of Cobham's on the Crécy campaign. Roger Mortimer, earl of March, son of Edward II's opponent,

[30] For the presence of these men at Crécy, see *Crécy and Calais*, ed. G. Wrottesley (London, 1898), 31, 35.

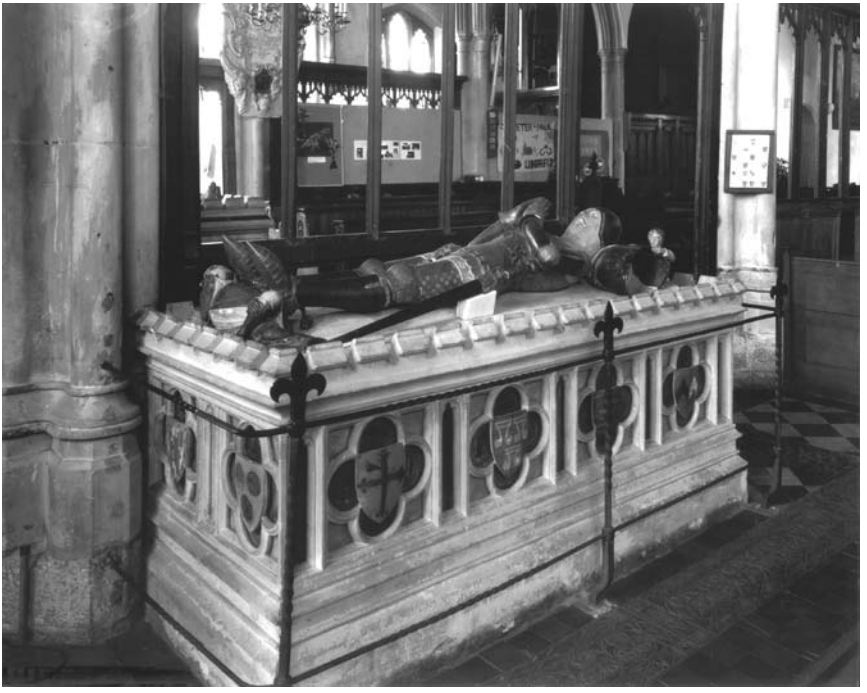

Figure 52. Lingfield (Surrey): Reginald, Lord Cobham (d. 1361)

was a younger lord who, like the others, fought at Crécy and Reims. On the northern side of the tomb are the arms of two more lords with whom Cobham had served: William, Lord Roos, and Sir Walter Pavely. William Roos, another younger lord, was included because of his close tenurial connection with Cobham, who held lands from him, and his involvement alongside Cobham in the Crécy campaign. Walter Pavely, a neighbour of Cobham's at Chiddingstone (Kent) and a veteran of the campaign trail, had fought at Crécy, Calais, and Poitiers and in most of the main engagements of the day. Like Cobham, he was elected a Knight of the Garter. On the eastern end of the tomb are the arms of two more veterans, Sir Stephen de Cossington and Sir Waresius de Valognes. Like Pavely, these were men of bachelor rank with lands principally in mid-Kent. The placing of their arms in a position of distinction on the end panel is accounted for by their role in Cobham's retinue organization. The two were Lord Cobham's principal recruiting sergeants, the linchpins around whom he built his larger war retinue. Their coats of arms complete a scheme which constitutes one of the most comprehensive celebrations of English military achievement in the early stages of the Hundred Years War.

Smaller schemes, constituted on similar lines, are found on a number of other military monuments of the fourteenth century. Although these are generally more

limited in scale than those at Elsing and Lingfield, they none the less reinforce the impression of martial solidarity in the knightly elite. One of the most interesting was found on the tomb of another Garter Knight, Ralph, Lord Basset of Drayton, formerly in Lichfield Cathedral.

Ralph Basset was a scion of a middling noble house whose lands were scattered across the north Midlands. He had won his spurs on the Black Prince's campaign in Aquitaine in 1356, probably, but not certainly, fighting at Poitiers.[31] Between the 1350s and the early 1380s he fought in most of the main campaigns in Scotland and France. In the 1370s he took part in expeditions led on land by John of Gaunt and at sea by the earl of Arundel. In 1380 he crossed with a contingent to Calais to join in Thomas of Woodstock's great march across France to Brittany. His last campaign was Bishop Despenser's ill-fated expedition to Flanders in 1383. Seven years later, he died, aged about 60.

The connections which Basset forged in the course of his long career were reflected in the armorial on his tomb chest, Lichfield.[32] Around the four sides, coats of arms with echoes of the campaign trail mingled with those of kinsfolk and feudal overlords. At one end, opposite each other on the long sides, were the arms of the king and the prince of Wales (the Black Prince).[33] Further along on the king's side were the arms of various comital and baronial families with whom Basset was associated by tenure or service. First came the arms of the earl of Chester, from whom he held some of his lands, then those of the earls of Gloucester and Warenne, both extinct lines with whom his forebears had ties.[34] Finally, there came the arms of the earls of Arundel and Devon and of Sir Edward Despenser, with all of whom Basset had fought in the 1360s or 1370s.[35] On the opposite side, along from the Black Prince's arms were the arms of Lord Daubeny, the earls of Warwick and Stafford, James, Lord Audley and Lord Grey of Codnor. A number of these coats attested family connections: Basset's first wife was the earl of Warwick's daughter, while his mother was Alice Audley, and his grandmother the daughter of Sir John de Grey of Ruthin. Family connections, however, merged with military ones. Basset had fought on campaign with the new earl of Warwick in the 1370s, and in 1369 and 1373 had enlisted in expeditions in which Henry Grey of Codnor was also a retinue leader. When he crossed to France with Thomas

[31] For his career, see *Complete Peerage*, ii. 3–5; K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), 31, 76, 92.

[32] The tomb is now lost, presumably destroyed in the Civil War, but there are drawings of it by Randle Holme and Dugdale. The drawing by the former, with the arms tricked, is in BL, Harley MS 2129, fo. 221^{v}. Dugdale's, which does not identify the arms, is in his 'Book of Monuments': BL, Add MS 71474, fo. 4^{v}.

[33] Since there was no prince of Wales in 1390, when Basset died, the arms must be those of the Black Prince. Basset had served with the prince in the 1350s and 1360s.

[34] The arms of the earls of Chester were those of the Blundevilles, who had held the earldom in the late 12th cent. and who became extinct in the male line in 1232. Strictly, then, it is truer that there were the arms of three extinct lines.

[35] G. Wrottesley, 'Military Service performed by Staffordshire Tenants during the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* (William Salt Archaeological Soc. 8, 1887), 99, 102, 108, 112, 114, 116.

of Woodstock in 1380, he had with him two members of the Audley family and the young heir of the earl of Stafford.[36] There were few significant military ties which Basset had forged in his career which were overlooked in the armorial. Basset was a figure highly esteemed by his peers and his views on military matters carried weight in the king's counsels.[37] He had been honoured with election to the Order of the Garter as early as 1368. His forebears stretching back over at least three generations had taken pride in their banneret status. In the 1340s his grandfather had been shown in a window in Drayton Basset church holding his banner and being armed by his wife. Before that, an earlier Ralph Bassett had been shown on a brass brandishing a banner.[38] The armorial in Lichfield Cathedral reflected the family's pride in its military traditions.

More restricted in scope, yet still indicative of military companionship, was the armorial on the tomb of Sir Hugh Calveley at Bunbury (Cheshire). Calveley, a close contemporary of Basset's, belonged to the class of soldiers of fortune who came into their own in the chaotic conditions of the 1360s.[39] Calveley had served his apprenticeship in the Breton wars of the 1340s and 1350s, twice being captured and at least once held to ransom. In 1356 he had commanded a company of archers at Poitiers. After the ending of hostilities in 1360 he carved a fresh career for himself as a mercenary, fighting in Spain for King Pedro of Castile and in Brittany for the English ally Duke John. In 1367 he fought under the Black Prince on the Najera campaign, and six years later took part in John of Gaunt's great march from Calais to Bordeaux. In his later years he served as captain of the garrisons of Calais and Brest. For his many highly publicized forays into French territory from these redoubts he earned the warm approval of the chroniclers.

Calveley's tomb in Bunbury church (Cheshire) ranks among the finest to a knight of its age. Although not obvious today because of the loss of the painted decoration, the tomb stands as a witness to his ties of companionship with Sir Robert Knolles. Shortly before his death in 1394, Calveley had named Knolles, a fellow Cheshireman, as executor to complete the establishment of a chantry in Bunbury church, which he had founded some years earlier.[40] In this capacity Knolles was probably responsible for placing the contract for Calveley's tomb. The

[36] Ibid. 116; G. Wrottesley, 'Military Service performed by Staffordshire Tenants, Temp. Richard II', *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* (William Salt Archaeological Soc. 14, 1893), 223, 225, 228; Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses*, 265–6; TNA: PRO, C76/52, mm. 3, 13; C76/56, mm. 19, 20.

[37] He was still offering counsel to the king as late as 1387. In the political crisis that year, when pressure was mounting on Richard II to dismiss his favourites, Basset is reported to have told the king that, while he would always be his faithful liegeman, he would not go into battle to have his head broken for the duke of Ireland (Robert de Vere): *Knighton's Chronicle, 1337–1396*, ed. G. H. Martin (London, 1995), 406.

[38] The brass is now lost, but was recorded by Dugdale; see Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, 127.

[39] For the 1360s, see K. Fowler, *Medieval Mercenaries*, I: *The Great Companies* (Oxford, 2001), in particular, for Calveley, 147–8, 177–9, 250–8.

[40] *ODNB* 9. 567. In his later years Calveley was separated from his Aragonese wife, Constanza, whom he had married in 1368, and who refused to accompany him north.

tomb chest with its alabaster effigy stands in the usual founder's position in the centre of the chancel, surrounded by a wrought iron hearse.[41] Below the chamfered edge of the chest is a row of shields tucked between the canopies of the now empty niches. On the shields, Knolles's arms were shown alternating with those of Calveley (the blazons now lost).[42] The armorial was an eloquent tribute by one campaign veteran to another. Knolles was honouring his deceased comrade as if he were a brother in arms. The relationship between them was one with a long history. The men had served alongside each other in France since the early 1350s. Whether or not they had ever formally entered into a relationship of brotherhood in arms is not known, although it seems likely.[43] Certainly, what is represented heraldically on Calveley's tomb is a relationship tantamount to brotherhood. Knolles had a liking for heraldic display. He commissioned schemes of coat of arms for the windows of two Norfolk churches which he rebuilt, Harpley and Sculthorpe, and his arms appear on a roof boss in Norwich Cathedral.[44] His friends and kinsmen included his arms in their own buildings. Sir Edward Dallingridge had the Knolles arms placed above the gatehouse at Bodiam. It is tempting to see the armorial on Calveley's tomb as originating in a culture of heraldic celebration shared by all the leading knights of the age.

One less conventional late fourteenth-century memorial reinforces this impression of knightly solidarity. It is the tomb slab now in the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul, to two English knights who had died near the Byzantine capital in 1391, Sir John Clanvow and Sir William Neville.[45] The monument is of local stone and was probably the work of a Genoese sculptor. Measuring 2 metres by 1 metre, it consists of a seven-line epitaph with, below, two shields inclined to one another, each bearing the impaled arms of the two knights, and each surmounted by the knight's crest. Clanvow and Neville were both chamber officials of Richard II. Neville was a scion of a powerful northern baronial house and Clanvow, a distinguished poet, a former servant of Edward III with roots in the Welsh Marches. What took the two men on their journey to Constantinople is not clear, but it was probably a diplomatic initiative. Their deaths attracted the attention at home of the Westminster chronicler, who noted that Clanvow died on 17 October and his companion two days later, griefstricken at his friend's demise.[46] The two knights

[41] F. H. Crossley, 'Medieval Monumental Effigies remaining in Cheshire', *Trans. Historical Soc. of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 76 (1924), 14–15 and pl. 21.

[42] J. P. Rylands and F. C. Beazley, 'The Monuments at Bunbury Church, Cheshire', *Trans. Historical Soc. of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 69 (1917), 143.

[43] Fowler, *Medieval Mercenaries*, I. 10–11. For brotherhood in arms, a personal bond between knights, see M. H. Keen, 'Brotherhood in Arms', in his *Nobles, Knights and Men-at-Arms in the Middle Ages* (London, 1996), 43–62.

[44] T. Sims, 'Aspects of Heraldry and Patronage', in I. Atherton, E. Fernie, C. Harper-Bill, H. Smith (eds.), *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese, 1096–1996* (London, 1996), 456–7.

[45] S. Dull, A. Luttrell, M. Keen, 'Faithful unto Death: The Tomb Slab of Sir William Neville and Sir John Clanvowe, Constantinople, 1391', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 71 (1991), 174–90.

[46] *The Westminster Chronicle, 1381–1394*, ed. L. C. Hector and B. F. Harvey (Oxford, 1982), 480.

were buried in adjacent graves in the Dominican church at Galata, where the slab was placed to their memory. The monument's most remarkable characteristic is that on each shield the arms of the two knights are shown impaled. Impaling was a way of marshalling the arms of a husband and wife on a single shield. In this case, the two coats of arms being men's, the relationship must have been one very close to marriage, in other words, brotherhood in arms. The relationship between Clanvow and Neville was as close as that between their contemporaries Calveley and Knolles expressed on the tomb at Bunbury.

Military armorials, though most commonly associated with funerary monuments, were by no means confined to them. In cathedrals and churches they might be found in stained glass windows and decorative stonework, while in secular contexts they might be found in halls or over castle gatehouses. One of the most celebrated armorials is that in the east window of Gloucester Abbey (now Gloucester Cathedral).[47] This massive glass screen, dating from about 1350, and featuring in its centre the Coronation of the Virgin, fills the whole of the east wall of the remodelled choir arm. At its foot and across its full width is placed a row of shields. The series of arms affords clues both to the identity of the benefactor and to the motivation for his gift. On the left are the arms of Richard, earl of Arundel; Thomas, Lord Berkeley; Thomas, earl of Warwick; and William de Bohun, earl of Northampton; and from the right, those of the earl of Pembroke; Richard, Lord Talbot; Sir Maurice de Berkeley; and Thomas, Lord Bradeston. In the centre, the group of arms, today all jumbled, included those of the king, the Black Prince, and Henry of Grosmont. What the bearers of these arms had in common was their involvement in the Crécy–Calais campaign. Warwick, Arundel, and Northampton were the three leading commanders in the battle; Talbot was also present but inactive because of wounds suffered in a skirmish; while Grosmont was engaged in diversionary operations in the south. Sir Maurice de Berkeley and Thomas, Lord Bradeston, the two local men, had a long record of service together. John Smyth, the Berkeley family historian, described them as 'inseparable companions in arms'.[48] Early in February 1347 Sir Maurice died, probably a victim of the dysentery which swept through the English camp. It has been suggested that Bradeston commissioned the window as a tribute to his dead friend.[49]

[47] The fullest recent discussion of the window is J. Kerr, 'The East Window of Gloucester Cathedral', in T. A. Heslop and V. A. Sekules (eds.), *Medieval Art and Architecture at Gloucester and Tewkesbury* (BAA Conference Transactions, vii, 1985 for 1981), 116–29.

[48] J. Smyth, *The Berkeley MSS*, i and ii: *The Lives of the Berkeleys*; iii: *The Hundred of Berkeley*, ed. J. Maclean (Gloucester, 1883–5), i. 252.

[49] C. Winston, 'An Account of the Painted Glass in the Great East Window of Gloucester Cathedral', *Archaeological Jnl.* 20 (1863), 239–53, 319–30, in particular, 326. Kerr, 'East Window of Gloucester Cathedral', is sceptical of Winston's suggestion, doubting the association with the victories of Crécy and Calais and suggesting the king's responsibility or that of a group of senior patrons. A link with the victories seems likely, however, given that the window dates from only a few years after the triumphs and given, too, the other contemporary evidence of chivalric pride. Bradeston's possible responsibility for the window is suggested not only by the placing of his arms next to Maurice de Berkeley's (not perhaps a conclusive argument given the disturbance to the

There are echoes here of Knolles's tribute to Calveley and Grosmont's to Hugh Hastings.

Military armorials were probably once quite common on monuments and in stained glass windows in late medieval England. It is possible that another example is to be found on the tomb of Sir John Sutton (d. 1356) at Sutton-on-Hull (Yorks.), where the arms of Fitzwilliam, Greystoke, Darcy, Cantilupe, Ros, Percy and Lucy appear to be those of the deceased's fighting companions. Unfortunately, with the destruction of so much of the glass and the wearing away of polychrome decoration on tombs, the greater number of the schemes have been lost. It is often assumed that the majority of the schemes of heraldry on medieval tomb chests were dynastic in character; and quite possibly this was the case. None the less, in a small but significant number the connections celebrated were not dynastic but military. The shields were the shields of men who were companions in arms. They provide some of the clearest evidence that the ties forged on the campaign trail endured in later life—even unto death. Although the destrier—the warhorse—made less impact on English funerary art than on Italian, the values of war were still reflected in its repertory of motifs.

CRÉCY AND THE ORDER OF THE GARTER

A striking characteristic of these armorials is that the great majority date from the fourteenth century. They are products of the Edwardian, and not the later Lancastrian, phase of the Hundred Years War. One of the few later examples is found on the tomb of Sir John Cressy (d. 1444) at Dodford (Northants). Here, the duke of Bedford's arms—the arms of the commander under whom Cressy fought in France—act as a visual counterpart to the biographical details of military service recorded on the epitaph.[50] As an example of chivalric display from the later period, however, the example stands alone.

It is possible to be more precise in locating these schemes chronologically. A fair proportion, and certainly the more ambitious, date from the mid-fourteenth century—from the decade after the twin triumphs of Crécy and Calais. Edward III's massive victories over the French generated an outburst of chivalric pride which found expression in heraldic self-consciousness. After four decades of setback and defeat for English arms, the tide of military fortune had finally turned. The king's victories enabled the nobility and gentry to regain a sense of confidence in their vocation. There can be little doubt that those who had fought at Crécy were conscious of participating in a battle of enormous significance. They saw

shields) but by his close association with the town of Gloucester. From 1340 he held a grant of the King's Barton by Gloucester, a franchise which he exercised with some ruthlessness: *CPR 1338–40*, 448; *1343–5*, 551; N. E. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981), 77, 266–7.

[50] A. Hartshorne, *Recumbent Monumental Effigies in Northamptonshire* (London, 1876), 32. For the inscription on Cressy's tomb, see above, 209.

themselves as having contributed to an event which both vindicated the king's cause and prompted national celebration.

At the same time, however, they were also aware that the victory had not come about without planning or military preparation. The elite corps of men at arms and archers who had fought so effectively had practised their tactics over many seasons' campaigning. It was through regular service on campaigns in Scotland and the Low Countries in the 1330s that they had developed the techniques and forged the solidarities which were to serve them so well later. By 1346, when they reached Crécy, they were experienced and professional campaigners; they had mastered an effective set of tactics, and they knew how to deploy them as a team. It was the network of ties and solidarities which bound them as a force which found heraldic expression on their tombs. Heraldry—the systematic display of blazons on a shield—afforded them the ideal visual means by which to express their sense of collective identity. This sense of comradeliness manifested itself in other ways. Not infrequently members of the military community charged their executors with commissioning tombs modelled on those of their fellows. In 1371 the Garter Knight Sir Walter Mauny asked for his tomb to be modelled on John, Lord Beauchamp's in St Paul's Cathedral.[51] Five years later, his companion Sir Richard Pembridge requested railings around his tomb like those surrounding the same Lord Beauchamp's.[52] In the fourteenth century, to a greater degree than after Henry V's triumphs, the pride of the victorious commanders worked its way into funerary art. Monuments became a medium for the expression of the collective glory of the military elite.

There can be little doubt that Edward and his commanders deliberately encouraged the growth of a cult around the victory of Crécy. Evidence of this is to be found in the king's establishment of his brotherhood, the Order of the Garter, a few months after his return to England. All the Founder Knights of the Order had taken part in the campaigning of the previous year. Once the elite character of the Order was recognized, its insignia was to provide yet another means by which chivalric values found expression in English funerary art.

Just how quickly the Order's insignia was absorbed into the artistic repertory of knightly monuments is hard to establish. Unfortunately, many monuments to the first generation of Knights have been lost, and several of those which have survived have suffered losses or ill-judged restorations. There are clear signs, however, that by the 1360s the importance of the Order's insignia was already appreciated. In 1361, when the monument was erected to Reginald, Lord Cobham, at Lingfield (Fig. 52), the garter, the Order's distinctive symbol, was shown on the deceased's left leg. In the same year, when a tomb was placed to the memory of William, Lord Fitzwaryn at Wantage (Berks.), the garter was again shown. In 1375, when a monument similar to Cobham's was erected to another Knight, Sir Richard Pembridge, in Hereford Cathedral, the garter was shown yet again. These monuments provide

[51] W. Dugdale, *The Baronage of England* (2 vols., London, 1675), ii. 150.

[52] *Calendar of Wills of the Court of Husting, London, AD 1258–AD 1688*, ed. R. R. Sharpe (2 vols., London, 1890), ii. 188.

impressive testimony to early recognition of the garter. Yet there are monuments, some of considerable distinction, on which the garter is omitted. The earl of Warwick (d. 1369), a Founder Knight, is not shown with the garter on his tomb at St Mary's, Warwick. Nor, surprisingly, is the Black Prince on a monument otherwise rich in armorial display at Canterbury. Sir Miles Stapleton (d. 1364) was not shown with the garter on his brass, now lost, at Ingham (Norfolk). On the evidence of Holmes's drawing, it is even to be doubted whether the garter was shown on Lord Basset's monument at Lichfield. The omission of the garter from some or all of these monuments may suggest that in its early days the Order was not accorded the same degree of recognition as it was to receive later.

In most if not all of these cases, however, there are circumstances which help to explain the garter's omission. The earl of Warwick's monument of 1369, for all its splendour and size, is a fairly standard London-made product showing little sign of personal involvement by the client. The omission of the garter from the Black Prince's monument can be explained in terms of the iconographic focus on the deceased's identity as prince of Wales. The prince's emblem of the ostrich feathers alternated on the sides of the tomb chest with his coat of arms—the royal arms with a label—while the ostrich feathers and the coat of arms were included among the funerary achievements above the tomb.[53] The choice of material for the effigy—copper alloy—reinforced the emphasis on the prince's position as a king in waiting. Inclusion of the garter in such a context could be said to have detracted from the thematic emphasis of the monument. So far as Basset's monument at Lichfield is concerned, it should be remembered that the evidence of the antiquaries' drawings can be highly unreliable: omission of the garter may have been due simply to oversight.

There is in fact plentiful evidence to indicate that within fifty years of the Order's foundation its insignia was considered important enough to be represented on monuments. We have seen that by the 1370s the Garter insignia had been represented on at least three major monuments, those at Lingfield, Wantage, and Hereford. In about 1375 it was also represented on the effigy of John, Lord Mohun, fragments of which have been found at Torre Abbey (Devon).[54] A little later it was represented on the memorial brass, now at East Barsham (Norfolk) and with its inlays missing, to Sir Thomas Felton (d. 1381), in this case encircling the shields which pepper the slab.[55] At the end of the next decade it was shown on the effigy in Old St Paul's of the courtier Sir Richard Burley, who had died while on Gaunt's expedition to Spain.[56]

[53] The tomb was executed strictly in accordance with the instructions which the prince gave in his will, which even included the wording of the epitaph: *Collection of all the Wills of the Kings and Queens of England*, ed. J. Nichols (London, 1780), 66–76. If the garter was omitted, it was not because the prince had given no thought to the matter of his commemoration.

[54] Personal communication from P. Lankester and B. and M. Gittos.

[55] The brass was originally at Little Walsingham Priory. It is identified as Felton's by R. Fiske, 'An Important Indent for a Lost Brass at All Saints Church, East Barsham', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 45 (2005), 713–15.

[56] I am grateful to Philip Lankester for pointing out to me that this last St Paul's tomb, known from a drawing made for Dugdale (BL, Add MS 71474, fo. 181^{v}; J. Harvey; *Henry Yevele: The Life*

The garter was almost certainly represented on other late fourteenth-century monuments. It is likely to have been shown on the effigy, now lost, of Sir Alan Buxhill (d. 1381), also in Old St Paul's, as he was described as a Knight of the Order on his epitaph.[57] It is reasonable to suppose that it was also on the effigy of John, Lord Beauchamp, in the same church, since a fellow Knight, Sir Richard Pembridge, had asked for his monument to be modelled on Beauchamp's, and Pembridge's own has the garter.[58]

In the early fifteenth century, representations of the garter became fairly common on monuments. In 1409 Sir Peter Courtenay was shown wearing the garter on a brass in Exeter Cathedral. In 1416 Richard II's former standard bearer, Sir Simon Felbrigg, was likewise shown with the garter at Felbrigg (Norfolk). In 1421 one of Henry V's commanders at Agincourt, Thomas, Lord Camoys, was shown wearing the garter on his magnificent brass at Trotton (Sussex).[59] From the 1410s, representations of the garter become de rigueur on monuments of Knights of the Order. Among the numerous knightly effigies shown with the insignia are those of William Phelip, Lord Bardolph, at Dennington (Suffolk), John Beaufort, earl of Somerset, at Wimborne Minster (Dorset), and Henry Bourchier, earl of Essex, at Little Easton (Essex). Where the effigies are mounted on tomb chests, the garter iconography is sometimes deployed around the sides of the chest. This is the case on the monuments of the duchess of Lancaster (*c*.1410) in Lincoln Cathedral, Sir Louis Robsart in Westminster Abbey, and the duke of Richmond at Framlingham (Suffolk). In each of these instances, a distinctive feature of the iconography is the use of the garter device as a surround for the deceased's arms. Representations of the garter on monuments were a uniquely English way of celebrating high military achievement. Through the medium of this exotic and enigmatic device, attention was drawn to the link between individual honour and the Christian responsibilities of knighthood.

The rich chivalric milieu, out of which the Order grew, found visual expression on monuments in another way. As Juliet Vale has shown, the immediate background to the establishment of the Order is to be found in the tourneying entertainments at Edward's court in the 1330s and 1340s. A characteristic of these entertainments

of an English Architect (London, 1944), pl. 61), and conventionally attributed to Sir Simon Burley, should on heraldic grounds be attributed to his brother, Richard. For his death, see *Westminster Chronicle*, 190.

[57] Buxhill was described as 'miles de Garter' on his epitaph: P. Fisher, *The Tombs and Monuments in St Paul's Cathedral*, ed. G. B. Morgan (London, 1684, repr. 1885).

[58] This means that the garter may also have been represented on the monument, now lost, at the Charterhouse, London, of Sir Walter Mauny. In his will of 1371 Mauny asked, as Pembridge was to do, for his tomb to be modelled on that of John Beauchamp in St Paul's: Dugdale, *The Baronage of England,* ii. 150. Beauchamp's tomb, though also lost, is known to us from an engraving by Hollar: Harvey, *Henry Yevele*, pl. 50. Unfortunately, the view is from an unhelpful angle and it is not possible to establish whether the garter was represented.

[59] These monuments are all extant. Evidence of external recognition is afforded by the inclusion of the garter on the alabaster monument of John IV, duke of Brittany (d. 1399), once in St Peter's, Nantes. The monument, now lost, was made in England in 1408: F. H. Crossley, *English Church Monuments A.D. 1150–1500* (London, 1921), 27.

was the knights' use of disguise. The king and those tourneying with him dressed in exotic helms and uniforms, so as to appear in the lists incognito. Over the two-year period from 1337 to 1339 no fewer than 3,000 peacocks' feathers were ordered for just one exotic crest for the king's use in a joust, while in 1348, after the capture of Calais, fourteen peacocks' heads were made into crests for the king's 'ludi' at Guildford.[60] The knights who took part in these hastiludes—usually royal chamber knights—often had crests unique to themselves. It is these crests which are depicted on the garter stall plates in St George's Chapel. Sir John de Lisle, for example, adopted the device of a millstone, the Captal de Buch a man's head in profile, and Sir Nigel Loring a flower pot with flowers issuing from it.

Very likely, some of the more exotic crested helms depicted on knightly monuments had their origin in the practice of knightly dressing-up. Three of Edward's most distinguished captains—two of them Knights of the Garter—made use of crests with Saracens' heads. These were Sir Miles Stapleton, Reginald, Lord Cobham, and John de Vere, earl of Oxford. At Lingfield, Cobham is shown with both a Saracen at his feet and a Saracen-crested helm under his head. The Saracen disguise was a very popular one in mid-fourteenth-century hastiludes. It is not unreasonable to suppose that Stapleton, Cobham, and Oxford had all fought at some stage as members of a Saracen team in court entertainments. The appearance of the Saracen crest on such later monuments as those of John, Lord Bourchier, at Halstead (Essex), Sir John de Wittlebury at Marholm (Northants), and Sir Sampson and Sir John de Strelley at Strelley (Notts.) is probably to be explained in these terms: the knights commemorated had at some stage, perhaps in their youths or between campaigns, served in tourneying teams.[61]

It is worth speculating on the significance of the presence of crested helms on church monuments more generally. Before the early fifteenth century, when their function became purely decorative, big tourneying helms were not often found on monuments. On sculpted tombs a helm of some sort was needed as a support for the knight's head; the richer, more exotic sorts of helms, however, were uncommon: indeed, on brasses they were quite rare. It is tempting to suppose that the more exotic examples may be representations of the knights' own helms. What is striking is just how many of the knights shown with such helms had distinguished records of service. At Bottesford (Leics.) William, Lord Roos (d. 1414), a Knight of the Garter and heir to a distinguished military line, rests his head on a helm topped

[60] J. Vale, 'Image and Identity in the Prehistory of the Order of the Garter', in N. E. Saul (ed.), *St George's Chapel, Windsor, in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2005), 45–7. The attraction of the peacock was that it was a symbol of immortality.

[61] At least two of these knights had distinguished military records. John, Lord Bourchier had fought in Brittany, Flanders, and France, while Sir Sampson de Strelley, giving evidence in the Scrope–Grosvenor hearings in 1386, said that he had been armed for 26 years and had seen the arms of Scrope displayed while on the Reims campaign of 1360. Strelley's statement is borne out by the evidence of his record: he took part in most of the main campaigns of the period (M. Jones, 'The Fortunes of War: The Military Career of John, second Lord Bourchier (d. 1400)', *Essex Archaeology and History*, 26 (1995); N. H. Nicolas, *The Controversy between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor in the Court of Chivalry* (2 vols., London, 1832), i. 152–3; ii. 357–8; TNA: PRO, C76/52, m. 8; C76/55, m. 22; C76/56, m. 18).

by a peacock head and feathers, similar to the one commissioned by Edward III (Fig. 53). So too does another active knight of the period, Sir Thomas Arderne (d. 1391), on his tomb at Elford (Staffs.).[62] A helm topped by a hunting horn is found supporting the head of Sir William de Brien (d. 1395) at Seal (Kent). Brien, a younger son of the Garter Knight Sir Guy de Brien, had served in both France and Ireland and held office as captain of Marck, near Calais.[63] An exotic helm, of which only the indent remains, propped up the head of Thomas, Lord Berkeley, at Wotton-under-Edge (Glos.). In the 1370s and 1380s Lord Berkeley, one of the most active knights of his day, saw extensive service in France and at sea.[64] Crested helms figure prominently on the monuments of a group of late fourteenth-century courtier knights, providing yet further evidence of a link with court hastiludes. At Blickling (Norfolk) Sir Nicholas Dagworth, one of Richard II's chamber knights, rests against a helm surmounted by a strange-looking goat with a long neck. At Bray (Berks.) Sir John Foxley, a chamber knight of Edward III, reclines against a helm crowned by a fox's head, an obvious pun on his name. At Draycot Cerne

Figure 53. Bottesford (Leics.): William, Lord Roos (d. 1414)

[62] Arderne served in France and Spain between the 1350s and 1370s: Wrottesley, 'Military Service performed by Staffordshire Tenants during the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', 99, 103, 109, 116. [63] *CPR 1381–5*, 192, 230; *CPR 1391–6*, 474; TNA: PRO, C76/72, m. 6.
[64] Smyth, *The Berkeley MSS*, ii. 7–9.

(Wilts.) Sir Edward de Cerne, another of Edward's knights, rests on a huge helm crowned by the figure of a demi lion.[65] In each of these instances it is likely that the exotic crest alludes to the early career of the commemorated as a participant in courtly hastiludes.

It is possible that references to tourneying are to be found in the iconography of some other military effigies of the period. A feature of some fifteenth-century effigies is the appearance on them of mottoes. The wording most often employed on these is religious: it is usually the Latin abbreviation for the words 'Jesus of Nazareth'—'Ihc Nazaren' or, more briefly, the sacred monogram 'Ihc'. In every case, the formula is placed on the upper edge of the bacinet, immediately above the forehead. Good examples of the motto are found on the effigies at Spilsby (Lincs.), Methley (Yorks.), Elford (Staffs.), Northleigh (Oxon.), and Lowick (Northants). Very likely, the words were invested with apotropaic qualities, and it is possible that they were associated with or displayed by particular groups of fighters.

There is one motto which is very different in character from the others. This is the motto 'Bettir is pys than wers', which appears on the lower hem of a mid-fourteenth-century effigy at Wilsthorpe (Lincs.). While the sentiment of the motto is religious, the most plausible explanation for its presence on the effigy is secular. Claude Blair has convincingly argued that the words were the motto of a local tourneying team.[66] There is evidence that a tourneying team was operating in Lincolnshire in the 1340s. In February 1344 the king wrote to the sheriff of Lincoln, in response to the initiative of a group of Lincolnshire knights, granting them permission to hold hastiludes at Lincoln under the captaincy of his cousin, Henry of Grosmont.[67] It is apparent from the order that a team of knights was already in existence and was seeking authorization for some quite ambitious event. It is reasonable to suppose that the knight commemorated at Wilsthorpe, probably Sir Ralph de Mortimer, was a member of this team. The inscribing of the enigmatic motto on his effigy affords further evidence of the high level of chivalric awareness of these years.

The loss of so many late medieval monuments and the mutilation of others together make it difficult to assess how widespread references to military achievement were in the commemorative art of the period. What is clear, however, is that the celebration of military achievement was more common than often supposed. On the tombs of the most distinguished knightly commanders, such as Sir Hugh Hastings and Reginald, Lord Cobham, rich armorials celebrated the companionship of the military community. On the effigies of Garter Knights representations of the garter celebrated the *esprit de corps* of Europe's first and most distinguished

[65] For Dagworth and Foxley, see C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England, 1360–1413* (New Haven and London, 1986), 283, 280. For Cerne, a royal household knight, see TNA: PRO, E101/392/12, fo. 40r (wardrobe book of the household, 1353). He took part in Edward's expedition to Reims in 1359–60, and in an expedition to France in 1372: TNA: PRO, C76/38, m. 11; C76/55, m. 14. His brass is illustrated in E. Kite, *Monumental Brasses of Wiltshire* (1860, repr. Bath, 1969), pl. III.

[66] C. Blair and J. Goodall, 'An Effigy at Wilsthorpe: A Correction to Pevsner's *Lincolnshire*', *CM* 17 (2002), 39–48.

[67] *CPR 1343–5*, 196, 379.

Order of chivalry. Beneath the heads of military effigies, exotic crested helms attested the tourneying triumphs of knights in their years of apprenticeship. In at least some churches reference to military achievement was further provided by the funerary arms and armour on display near monuments. In Canterbury Cathedral the Black Prince's weapons and 'pavis', or target, were hung above his tomb, with his 'arms of war' and 'arms of peace' on the pillars close by. In similar fashion, a helmet and a banner displaying his arms were suspended over Sir Richard Pembridge's tomb in Hereford Cathedral.[68] The monuments and armour together contributed to preserving the memory of the knights' achievements in a setting which emphasized the Christian function of their vocation.

THE WEAKENING OF CHIVALRIC REFERENCE

Impressive as the evidence of military awareness is, it is striking that it comes almost entirely from the fourteenth century. The evidence of military achievement on monuments of the later, Lancastrian, phase of the War amounts to far less.[69] In the mid-fourteenth century the triumphs of Crécy and Calais led to enormous outpouring of chivalric pride on monuments and in stained glass windows. Seventy years later, Henry V's victory at Agincourt appears to have elicited no similar reaction. Once the evidence of the inscriptions is laid aside, the military monuments of the fifteenth century are iconographically far less distinctive than those of the years 1340–60.

One possible reason for the contrast might be the relative uniformity of most fifteenth-century monuments. The majority of knightly memorials of these years were produced to metropolitan models in workshops with high levels of output. In the circumstances little opportunity was given to patrons to influence the designs of their memorials beyond the choice of component parts. By itself, however, this argument is insufficient to explain the contrast between the monuments of the two centuries. Production levels were already high in the late fourteenth century when evidence of 'bespoke tailoring' is still relatively common. It is not immediately apparent why client influence should have declined so sharply by the 1420s. Nor is it immediately apparent why there should be so few specifically military armorials. The selection of a set of coats of arms was, after all, unique to every monument.

A more persuasive explanation for the lack of military reference on fifteenth-century monuments is to be found in a different factor—the changing character of the Anglo-French war. In the fourteenth century English military activity had taken the form of irregular raids, or *chevauchées*, across France in which rapidly moving English forces cut a destructive swathe, plundering and burning as they

[68] T. Dingley, *History from Marble*, ed. J. G. Nichols (Camden Soc., 1867), 73, cxliv. Pembridge's helmet was given away by the Cathedral in 1822 and is now in the National Museum of Scotland. I am grateful to Philip Lankester for this information.

[69] See above, 222.

went, to force the local populace into surrender. In the early fifteenth century, after Henry V's reopening of the war, and in particular after 1417, English strategy changed. A war which had hitherto been one of irregular raids became one of conquest and settlement. English forces no longer crossed to France to plunder and score quick victories but to occupy the land and defend it. The soldiery who dominated this phase of the War were hardened professionals, not part-timers.[70] In the fourteenth century, experience of warfare had been widely disseminated among the county gentry; the majority of the knights and richer esquires who ran the shires had at least some experience of military service. In the fifteenth century this was no longer the case. The established gentry, the men who served in the offices of sheriff and JP, were less involved in the fighting. After Henry V's death remarkably few of them chose to fight in France on campaign.[71] Later, as the war turned against the English, and disenchantment set in, even fewer did so. With the gradual weakening of the knights' military experience, knighthood became more of a civil and political estate. Increasingly, the ranks of the knights overlapped with those of the squirearchy, who were themselves now armigerous. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the marks of military achievement on tombs should have become so few and far between.

A second important change affected the composition of the group commemorated by effigies of this kind. This was the gradual erosion by the fourteenth century of the traditional distinctions between the rural and the urban elites. Before Edward I's time ties between the urban and rural upper classes had been relatively few. Members of the two elites might interact and intermarry, but the leading officers of the towns showed little interest in aspiring to the lifestyle of the aristocracy. From the early fourteenth century, however, the situation began to change. An elite of much greater social ambition emerged in the towns with an interest in the trappings of aristocratic display. In London from the early fourteenth century instances are encountered of richer merchants assuming the rank of knight.[72] By Edward II's reign there were three merchant knights in London, and by Richard II's reign at least five. From the time of Edward IV's coronation in 1461 it became common for mayors of London to be knighted. With this new mercantile interest in knighthood went a growing taste for heraldry. The richer of the citizenry began to adopt heraldic coats of arms as well as, or instead of, their traditional merchants' marks. By the late fourteenth century at least eighty London citizens, the majority of them aldermen, were using armorial devices either on their own authority or

[70] M. H. Keen, 'The End of the Hundred Years War: Lancastrian France and Lancastrian England', in his *Nobles, Knights and Men-at-Arms*, 239–55.

[71] Only one expedition produced a substantial turn-out, the coronation expedition of 1430–31: see M. R. Powicke, 'Lancastrian Captains', in T. A. Sandquist and M. R. Powicke (eds.), *Essays in Medieval History presented to Bertie Wilkinson* (Toronto, 1969), 371–82. Powicke's 'Thomas, lord of Echyngham' is Sir Thomas de Etchingham, commemorated with his father and mother by the spectacular brass at Etchingham (Sussex), 1444. As was the case with many of these men, it seems that the coronation expedition was the only one in which Etchingham took part.

[72] For this paragraph, see S. L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London* (Chicago, 1948), ch. 6.

by grant. At the same time, the more upwardly mobile of the merchants began to invest some of their wealth in the purchase of country estates. The Frowicks, a rich London merchant dynasty, bought an estate at South Mimms (Herts.), while the wealthy Swanlands established a gentry branch at nearby Harefield (Middx.). To set the seal on a semi-aristocratic identity, the gentleman-merchants began building elaborately castellated manor houses like those of the aristocracy, as Sir John Pulteney did at Penshurst (Kent).[73] This blurring of what had once been distinct burgess and aristocratic identities was reflected in urban funerary practice. By the mid-fourteenth century the Londoners, long aspirants to 'baronial' status, were being buried with all the panoply earlier reserved for aristocrats. A servant or household esquire would present himself at the door of the funeral church mounted on a caparisoned horse, dressed in the armour of the deceased, and displaying his shield, banner, and arms.[74] Unsurprisingly, given these developments, it became common for merchants to be represented on their tombs in armour. In the early fourteenth century the Alards, one of the leading families or 'barons' of the Cinque Ports, were commemorated at Winchelsea by armoured effigies. A little later, and less plausibly, John Whitmore, a mayor of Chester was shown at Holy Trinity, Chester, in armour.[75] In the fifteenth century a Canterbury alderman, John Byg, was commemorated by an armoured kneeling figure at St Peter's church in his native city.[76] Most remarkably of all, in 1408 the formidable Dartmouth merchant, John Hawley, on whom Chaucer may have modelled his Shipman, was commemorated at Dartmouth by one of the most swagger military effigies of the age.[77]

In this new, more socially fluid world, is it possible to detect any cultural reference points which helped patrons to decide how to be shown on their effigies? A couple of centuries earlier, when society had been less mobile, and when the notion of the three divinely ordained orders still retained some meaning, determining manner of attire had been relatively straightforward. Knights were shown in armour, and all those of lesser estate as civilians. In the late medieval period, and in particular in the age of higher mobility which followed the Black Death, matters were less easily settled. So how did patrons and executors settle on an appropriate attire? A number of considerations may have influenced their thinking.

The first was whether or not the commemorated had been in magnate service. A number of the newly important esquires shown in armour had been active as magnate administrators. In late medieval England service to a magnate, at least

[73] The developments in London are mirrored in many other English towns: R. Horrox, 'The Urban Gentry in the Fifteenth Century', in J. A. F. Thomson (ed.), *Towns and Townspeople in the Fifteenth Century* (Gloucester, 1988), 22–44.

[74] *Liber Albus: The White Book of the City of London*, ed. H. T. Riley (London, 1861), 29.

[75] Crossley, 'Medieval Monumental Effigies remaining in Cheshire', 13–14.

[76] BL, Egerton MS 3310A, fo. 15^{v}: a book of church notes by John Philipot, *c*.1613–24. As so often with antiquaries' notes and drawings, it is not clear whether the figure was in glass or on a brass. Its purpose, however, was commemorative: there was an inscription asking for prayers.

[77] For Hawley's career, see *History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1386–1421*, ed. Roskell, Clark, and Rawcliffe (Stroud, 1992), iii. 328–30.

at the higher levels, was held to confer honour. Not only was it believed that some of the employer's distinction rubbed off onto his servant; the outward and visible signs of magnate service—the collar and the furred robe—in legal opinion constituted evidence of gentility. Some of the grandest late-medieval memorials commemorate men who were, in contemporary parlance, 'great about lords'. Two early fifteenth-century monuments in this category are those of two Oxfordshire esquires, William and John Wilcotes. William Wilcotes (d. 1411), a retainer, attorney, and feoffee of the earl of Warwick, was buried under a fine effigial monument with his wife at Northleigh (Oxon.) (Fig. 69), while his brother John, who served a succession of magnate employers including the future Henry V, was commemorated by a splendid brass (*c*.1410) at Great Tew near by.[78] Both men were shown in armour.

Numerous other esquires who were magnate retainers were shown so attired on their memorials. John Wyard (d. *c*.1404), another esquire of the earl of Warwick, is commemorated by an armoured effigy at Meriden (Wark.), where he founded a chantry.[79] At Arundel John Threel (d. 1465), marshal of the household of William, earl of Arundel, is likewise shown in armour, close to the tomb of the earl he served.[80] At Dorchester Abbey (Oxon.) Peter Idley, bailiff of Wallingford and servant of the Lancastrian and Yorkist kings, was shown in armour on a brass of *c*.1485, now lost but known from a drawing.[81]

Attachment to a magnate employer, however, did not invariably result in an esquire being represented in armour. For every retainer shown in this way, there were two or three others who were not. At Tattershall (Lincs.) Hugh de Gondeby (d. 1411), described on his epitaph as supervisor of Lord Cromwell, was shown as a civilian and wearing a scarf, perhaps the symbol of his office. At Owston (Yorks.) Robert Hatfield, a Lancastrian official and controller of Henry of Derby's household, was also shown as a civilian on a brass of *c*.1409 (Fig. 60).[82] At Rusper (Sussex) John de Kingsfold, a retainer of the earl of Arundel, was shown as a civilian on a brass with half-figures of *c*.1380.

The explanation for this apparent haphazardness in attire is to be found largely in the different qualities of blood of those commemorated. The retainers who were shown in civilian attire were those whose only claim to gentility came through service. Those depicted in armour were of better blood: their gentility was conferred by ancestry and the exercise of lordship over land. They could boast the ownership of manors and the jurisdiction over tenants exercised in manorial courts.

The ownership of land, and the exercise of lordship which went with it, brought a man full honourable recognition; it entitled him to use of a coat of arms. A

[78] Ibid. iv. 860–6.

[79] W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (2 vols., London, 1730), ii. 987.

[80] For discussion and an illustration, see C. E. D. Davidson-Houston, 'Sussex Monumental Brasses', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 76 (1935), 69–71.

[81] The brass is illustrated and discussed by J. Bertram, 'Fragments from Oxfordshire', *TMBS* 16 (2000–1), 378–81.

[82] Hatfield was in Lancastrian service from 1373: S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity, 1361–1399* (Oxford, 1990), 11, 25, 271.

landed estate could be acquired in a number of ways. Those with ample resources to draw on might snap up an estate on the open market. Lawyers and attorneys were particularly adept at spotting opportunities of this sort. In 1462 Robert Ingleton, a former common serjeant of London, snapped up the manor of Thornton (Bucks.), where he was later to seek commemoration. More commonly, land was acquired by securing the hand of an heiress. The brothers William and John Wilcotes had both won the hands of heiresses. It was this success, and the ownership of manors which came with it, which was the foundation of their right to be shown on their tombs in armour. It was much the same with another esquire of their generation, the royal servant William Snaith of Addington (Kent). Snaith, a northerner by birth, and probably a relation of Henry Snaith, clerk of the wardrobe under Edward III, won the hand of Alice, daughter of Richard Charles of Kent, through whom he acquired ownership of a series of manors near Maidstone.[83] Snaith was to become an active office-holder in Kent in his later years, being pricked as sheriff of the county just before his death. On his brass of 1409 at Addington, a small but ornate composition, on which he is described as sheriff, he is shown in armour under a canopy surrounded by a rich display of heraldry. As the lord of several manors, he was well qualified to indulge in this display of personal pride.

By the fifteenth century, therefore, the rigid funerary dress code of an earlier age was beginning to break down. In the thirteenth century representation in armour had been associated with knighthood, an occupation; a couple of centuries later it was to be associated more with lordship, an institution. In 1420, when Richard Hertcombe made his contract for a tomb for an earl of Salisbury, it was agreed that the earl was to be shown 'armed like a lord', not 'armed like a knight'.[84] This shift of emphasis reflected important changes in English society. In the thirteenth century, when the number of knights had been in decline, the knightly effigy, adorned with heraldry, had been a visible ensign of elitism, a symbol of a culture of exclusion. In the fifteenth century, when the emphasis had shifted from knighthood to quality of blood, the earlier conception was redefined: the ranks of the elite were now extended to include the esquires. In this new and more socially fluid world the armoured effigy came to stand less for exclusion than for social redefinition. The greater mobility of the period made decisions about effigial attire by no means easy to get right. Was an esquire-administrator to be shown in armour, or less ambitiously as a civilian? Contemporaries showed themselves remarkably sensitive to the nuances involved in making such a decision. An indication of this sensitivity is found in the changing attire on the brasses of the Andrewe family at Charwelton (Northants). The Andrewes were lessees of one of the manors in Charwelton in the 1490s, and

[83] Henry Snaith was successively keeper of the privy wardrobe, keeper of the great wardrobe, and chancellor of the exchequer. The name Snaith is a toponymic: Snaith is near Selby. William reflected on his northern roots when he made his will, leaving bequests to York Minster and the shrine of St John of Bridlington: Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Arundel, ii, fo. 43^{v}. For his career as a king's esquire: *CPR 1396–9*, 465; *CPR 1399–1401*, 259, 265.

[84] 'Come appent a un sire . . .': J. Bayliss, 'An Indenture for Two Alabaster Effigies', *CM* 16 (2001), 23.

fifty years later they were to acquire ownership of the manor outright.[85] On the first of their three brasses Thomas Andrewe (d. 1496), a well-to-do grazier, was shown as a civilian, with a sheep at his feet, to indicate the source of his wealth. On the two later memorials his son and grandson, each called Thomas, were shown in armour.[86] Over three generations the Andrewes made the transition from trade to gentility. When the transition was complete, they had themselves shown as lords.

Only a tiny handful of late medieval monuments point to any questioning of these funerary proprieties. Perhaps the most remarkable is the tomb of John Tame at Fairford (Glos.). Tame, a celebrated Cotswold woolman, was one of the richest and most successful merchants of his day. When he died in 1500 he owned business interests spread across four counties.[87] Shortly before his death he began the rebuilding of Fairford church, a task which his son Edmund was to bring to completion. Tame's tomb, standing just to the north of the high altar, under an arch separating the chancel from the adjacent chapel, was commissioned by Edmund. On the marble lid are the brass effigies of Tame himself and his wife with, above and below, their families' coats of arms. Remarkably, Tame is shown not as a civilian, like all the other Cotswold wool merchants, but in armour. There were grounds for this act of presumption on the son's part. In practice, if not in title, Tame was the lord of Fairford, since the manor was held by the Crown, and he and his father-in-law had taken a long lease.[88] Tame was exceptional in the range of his interests. He was simultaneously a grazier and a merchant, a townsman and a country landowner. Once, in an indictment in the Court of Common Pleas, he was described as 'John Tame of Fairford husbandman, alias merchant, alias gentleman, alias woolman, alias yeoman'.[89] Deciding in what attire such a man was

[85] For the Andrewe family, see N. W. Alcock and C. T. P. Woodfield, 'Social Pretensions in Architecture and Ancestry: Hall House, Sawbridge, Warwickshire and the Andrewe Family', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 76 (1996), 51–72. In the early 15th cent. the family had lived at Sawbridge in Wolfhampcote (War.), where in 1449 John Andrewe built a fine timber-framed house with cross wings. The family's move to Charwelton probably took place in the time of Thomas I, John's younger brother.

[86] The first two brasses are either the product of a single commission or date from within a few years of each other. Stylistically they can be assigned to the early 1490s. Thomas I's enormous brass dates from his lifetime: his date of death was not filled in. There is no provision for a memorial in his will: TNA, PROB 11/11, fo. 41^{r-v}. The second brass was commissioned as a memorial to Thomas II's wife, Emma (née Knightley), who died in 1490; her widower was to survive her by forty years. The fact that the brasses date from within a year or two of each other makes the difference in male attire all the more significant. Both brasses are products of the Coventry workshop. The third brass is a London product; by the 1540s the family's horizons had expanded.

[87] For Tame, see S. Brown and L. MacDonald (eds.), *Life, Death and Art: The Medieval Stained Glass of Fairford Parish Church* (Stroud, 1997), 16–18, 136–8.

[88] Tame built a house for himself which reflected his standing in the town: a generation later John Leland was to record 'a fair mansion place of the Tames hard by the chirch yarde, builded thoroughly by John Tame and Edmunde Tame. The bakside wherof goith to the very bridg of Fairford': *Itinerary of John Leland*, i. 127.

[89] E. Power, 'The Wool Trade in the Fifteenth Century', in E. Power and M. M. Postan (eds.), *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1933), 53.

to be shown was not easy. It was certainly less easy than for those earlier Cotswold woolmen who had no aspirations to gentility.

Yet, for all the fluidity of English late medieval society, most contemporaries had a clear enough sense of their place in the hierarchy of honour. They could tell whether they (or those for whom they might act) belonged to the gentry or to the merely free. When in 1477 John Feld esquire commissioned a brass to himself and his father, a London alderman, at Standon (Herts.), he instinctively knew that his own figure should be shown armed and his father's in civilian dress. What is remarkable is not so much the sensitivity of contemporaries to these conventions of attire as the fact that the conventions were, by the late fifteenth century, so obviously at odds with social reality. Many, perhaps the majority, of those shown in armour would never have donned a suit of armour in their lives. By the end of the Middle Ages the country gentry were becoming increasingly civilianized. Yet an unchanging funerary dress code required that they be shown in armour. Not till the late seventeenth century were any substantial adjustments made to the conventions inherited from the Middle Ages. It might be supposed that, as the web of 'bastard feudalism' spread through society, robes of livery would be depicted on the effigies of magnate retainers—livery being the most widely used ensign of lordship. Yet this appears rarely if ever to have been the case. Collars were represented on the effigies of magnate hangers-on, but never livery. It is possible that the phenomenon to be observed here represents a case of cognitive dissonance: of a reluctance to come to terms with changes which the social elite found distasteful. But perhaps there is something to be said for a different interpretation: that actually the very conservatism of the conventions of funerary sculpture constituted part of their appeal. In an age of high social fluidity an unchanging dress code performed the functions of simultaneously reassuring the elite of the power of traditional values and of easing social adjustment by assisting in the acculturation of new recruits to the gentry. In however modest a fashion, the unchanging funerary dress code contributed something to achieving an accommodation between the rhythms of social change and the assumptions of the established upper classes.

10

The Monuments of Civilians

In the medieval, estates-based, view of society, those below the rank of the armigerous gentry constituted the third estate. Since the members of this group were drawn chiefly from the labouring or artisan class, convention required that they be shown in civilian attire. The more affluent of the group might well possess armour and weaponry. But even when this was the case, the matter of their commemorative representation was unaffected. Seman Tong, a Baron of the Cinque Ports and merchant of Faversham (d. 1414), bequeathed pieces of armour in his will.[1] Yet on his brass he was shown as a civilian. The conventions of funerary decorum overrode social reality.

CIVILIAN MONUMENTS TO THE LATE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

The taste for effigial commemoration took root much later among members of the civilian estate than among the ecclesiastics and nobility. The earliest surviving civilian effigies date from the last two decades of the thirteenth century, 120 years after the appearance of the first ecclesiastical effigies.[2] By the beginning of the fourteenth century, when knightly effigies were becoming widespread, those of civilians were still relatively few. In the course of the fourteenth century, however, monuments of civilians grew rapidly in number, with civilian sculpted effigies and incised slabs being commissioned in all parts of the country. From the latter part of the fourteenth century, brasses to civilians added to the growing total. By the end of the Middle Ages civilian memorials, predominantly brasses, were as common as any other class of effigial monument.

One factor which may have constrained the early growth of civilian effigial commemoration was a preference at this social level for small, flat or semi-relief grave covers. Many of the 'civilians' commemorated by these monuments were burgesses and merchants who were buried in urban churches. Churches in towns were often small, and floor space in them would have been severely limited.

[1] *Chichele's Register*, ii. 14. The brass, a splendid product of style 'B' is illustrated in *TMBS* 14 (1990), 382.

[2] An isolated exception is the monument, now at Bures, of Aubrey de Vere (d. 1141), for which see above, 32.

Among both patrons and officiating clergy there would have been a preference for monument types which did not intrude into pew space or block processional routes.

Yet it may be that we are in danger of underestimating the scale of civilian commemoration before *c*.1320–40. It is precisely in urban churches, in which civilian memorials predominated, that the losses caused by neglect and destruction have been most severe. Hardly any medieval memorials have survived in the city churches of London, Coventry, and Bristol, and not many more in those of York, Hull, or King's Lynn. The rows of indents and effaced slabs at Boston and Barton on Humber afford an indication of the scale of the losses which have occurred. The commemorative self-consciousness of the burgess elites may well have been greater in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries than the surviving evidence suggests.

As it is, some 150 effigies of male civilians have come down to us from the period to *c*.1370.[3] A little over half of these are relief or semi-relief effigies, the remainder incised slabs, some of them with resin inlays; remarkably few are brasses. Brasses only won a commanding position in the market after 1400, when they swept to popularity more generally. Some of the civilian figures produced before 1400 are of extremely high quality. The brasses and incised slabs of Flemish origin, imported by the rich east coast merchants, are obviously in a class of their own. The brasses of Adam de Walsoken and Robert Braunche at St Margaret's, King's Lynn, rank among the finest memorials of their day (Fig. 62).[4] Hardly less notable are the incised slabs at Boston and Wyberton (Lincs.) and Gressenhall (Norfolk). The penetration of the English market by high-quality Flemish products began shortly after 1300 and rose to a peak in the wake of the Black Death, when the output of the London workshops was disrupted by loss of skilled manpower. In the fifteenth century imports from Flanders declined substantially in number. An outstanding late example is the brass of Roger Thornton (d. 1429) and his wife at All Saints, Newcastle upon Tyne.

The early sculpted civilian effigies of native workmanship, while artistically inferior to the Flemish imports, none the less comprise a series of considerable interest. They include a number of monuments of very high quality. One monument from the later thirteenth century stands out—the semi-relief slab at Winterbourne Bassett (Wilts.) of a man and wife under a trefoil-shaped canopy, holding hands. From the fourteenth century there are at least half a dozen monuments of note. Of outstanding quality are two pairs of effigies, *c*.1360–80, in the chancel at Pembridge (Heref.). The earlier consists of a man in a long tunic and a coif, perhaps a serjeant, with a wife in widow's dress; the other, and later, of a hatted man in a fashionable buttoned tunic and mantle, with a wife in a rectangular headdress (Fig. 56).[5] East of the Severn, at Pucklechurch

[3] For a list of sculpted effigies of civilians, see Appendix.

[4] H. K. Cameron, 'The Fourteenth-Century Flemish Brasses at King's Lynn', *Archaeological Jnl.* 136 (1979), 151–72.

[5] For mid-14th-cent. civilian attire, see S. M. Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince: A Study of the Years 1340–1365* (Woodbridge, 1980).

(Glos.), is the superb figure of a man, long-haired and bearded, attired in a belted tunic and shoulderpiece and with a purse hanging from his belt, probably of the mid-fourteenth century (Fig. 54). At Crich (Derby.) is another fine effigy of around the same date showing a man similarly attired to that at Pucklechurch, but this time without a purse or belt (Fig. 57). Other high-quality civilian effigies survive at Cherington (War.), Ashbourne (Derby.), Sutterton (Lincs.), and West Leake and Averham (Notts.).

These are all monuments with full-length sculpted figures. Many other examples from the early fourteenth century take semi-effigial or semi-relief form.[6] At Silchester (Hants) the busts of a civilian and his wife stand above a cross in a quatrefoil head resting on a tall stem.[7] At Appleby (Westmorland) a semi-relief effigy emerges from the top of a coped coffin lid, cut away. On a particularly distinctive monument at Bredon (Worcs.) the busts of a civilian and wife rest above the transverse arms of a cross, sculpted raguly so as to resemble a tree; a crucifix is placed at the point of intersection, and a canopy rises over the figures.

On a series of slabs in Lincolnshire the figure is shown in sunken relief, with only the upper and lower parts revealed. At Kingerby (Lincs.), *c*.1340–50, the head of the man emerges at the top of the slab, and his feet from a trefoil at the bottom, the space in between occupied by a cross on a stepped base flanked by two shields (Fig. 9). At Collingham (Notts.) on a similar slab the space between the upper and lower parts of the figure is occupied by the massive feature of the shield itself. At Washingborough (Lincs.) on a slab to a female the middle section is occupied by a large cross head.

Effigies of civilians are also found on stone or alabaster incised slabs. Among the earlier examples one of particular note is that at Odstock (Wilts.), *c*.1320–40, showing a civilian in a swaying posture clasping a heart.[8] Among many later examples, the memorial of Adam Malet and his wife, *c*.1390, at Irby on Humber (Lincs.) stands out. The best example of an effigy in wood is a fine figure at Much Marcle (Heref.) of *c*.1360.[9]

It is natural to enquire about the identity of the people commemorated by these effigies. Who were they? From which ranks of society were they drawn? And what were the sources of their wealth? Unfortunately the survival in so few cases of the epitaph accompanying the figure makes answering these questions difficult. In a handful of cases the presence of a shield of arms acts as an aid to identification. For a few others documentary evidence—the record of a chantry foundation, for example—sheds light. In the majority of instances, however, there is no evidence of identity at all. When so few effigies can be firmly attributed, it is

[6] Examples of semi-effigial monuments are found in C. Boutell, *Christian Monuments in England and Wales* (London, 1854), 120–36.

[7] The monument now lies in the churchyard and is covered by lichen.

[8] W. J. Blair, 'An Early Fourteenth-Century Incised Slab at Odstock, Wilts.', *TMBS* 12 (1979), 370–2.

[9] B. W. Spencer, 'A Fourteenth-Century Wooden Effigy from Much Marcle, Herefordshire', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 53 (1973), 266–7.

only to be hoped that any conclusions drawn will not be too unrepresentative of the group as a whole.

One point which can be made at the outset is that those commemorated came from a variety of backgrounds. At least a few were sprung from gentry or lordly stock. One of the two civilians at Thurlaston (Leics.) is identified by the inscription on his slab as Hugh Turville, who died in 1340. Hugh was lord of the manor of Thurlaston, a member of an armigerous family, as the shield on his wife's tomb shows, but not apparently a knight, and perhaps for that reason not shown in armour.[10] The civilian at Kingerby was also of armigerous stock. The shields of arms on his slab identify him as a member of the Disney family who held the manor, possibly William Disney esquire, recorded as lord in 1346.[11] The unidentified civilian at Cherington (War.) may likewise have been of gentry descent, his monument, which consists of an arcaded chest with effigy under an arch separating the nave from the aisle, being of a splendour to match that of any belted knight; the most likely candidate for the person commemorated is one of the Lucys of Charlecote, who held the manor. A number of other civilians were probably lords of manors. It is likely that the man commemorated by the effigy at Glanvilles Wootton (Dorset) was Henry de Glanville, lord of the manor, whose widow founded a chantry in the church in 1344.[12] The civilians at North Curry (Som.), Offord Darcy (Hunts.), and Willey (War.) were probably manorial lords whose income was insufficient to support knighthood. It is worth remembering that in Germany and central Europe before 1400 knights were invariably represented on their tombs in civilian attire with shields of arms.[13]

In England, however, it was never common for those who exercised lordship to be commemorated by effigies of civilian type. Lords were generally represented as knights.[14] The brass to Sir Thomas Brooke and his wife (*c.*1437) at Thorncombe (Dorset), in many ways an idiosyncratic product, constitutes one of the few exceptions to this rule.[15] If a more general collective identity for those commemorated by early civilian effigies is to be found, the inquiry will have to extend beyond the ranks of the lordly class.

A distinctive subgroup of the effigies commemorates foresters or holders of serjeanties with administrative responsibilities in the forest. Effigies in this category are easily identified because the commemorated is invariably shown with an attribute of office, usually a hunting horn. Excellent examples are provided by the effigies at Skegby (Notts.), Glinton (Northants), Wadworth (Yorks.), and Warham

[10] For the Turvilles and their monuments, see J. Nichols, *History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* (4 vols. in 8, London, 1795–1815), iv. ii. 998–9.

[11] *Feudal Aids, 1284–1431* (6 vols., London, 1899–1920), iii. 216.

[12] *CPR 1343–5*, 343; G. Dru Drury, 'Fourteenth Century Civil Costume as Represented by Three Dorset Stone Effigies', *Procs. of the Dorset Nat. Hist. and Arch. Soc.* 29 (1952), 55–9.

[13] Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, ii. 169. There are also some examples in France: *Les Tombeaux de la Collection Gaignières*, ed. J. Adhémar (2 vols., Paris, 1974, 1976), nos. 128–30.

[14] See above, 232.

[15] For discussion of this brass, see Saul, *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England* (Oxford, 2001), 230–2.

All Saints (Norfolk), all of fourteenth-century date. A fine later example is the monument of Jenkyn Wyrall at Newland (Glos.). At least at the higher and better remunerated levels, office in the forest could offer respectable rewards. In the 1370s a forester in the New Forest was paid a fee of 6*d*. a day, which would translate into an annual income of £9, while earlier in the century the chief forester at Windsor was being paid twice that.[16] A chief forester, or a forester in fee, would normally be a member of the lesser gentry, with lands worth annually some £5–£10, giving him a total income of £15–£20. A man of these means might well be able to afford a relief effigy, at least one made locally. Neither socially nor economically, however, could he be considered the equal of the knights.

The majority of those commemorated by civilian effigies are likely to have been lesser gentlemen of a different sort. They were almost certainly esquire-administrators who had risen to distinction through magnate or legal service. The late medieval class of esquires included in its ranks many able men, professionals or semi-professionals, who enjoyed successful careers administering the affairs of the mighty. A good example of the type is provided by the man commemorated by the effigy at Pucklechurch (Glos.)—William de Cheltenham, a long-serving official of the Berkeleys of Berkeley Castle (Fig. 54).[17] Cheltenham's career as a magnate servant and local administrator spanned some thirty years. He and his younger brother John appear to have entered the service of the Berkeleys in the mid-1320s, William being appointed steward by 1332.[18] From the 1330s to his death in *c*.1371 he is regularly encountered as a witness to the family's charters or as an agent in family legal transactions.[19] According to John Smyth, the Berkeley family historian, he was Thomas, Lord Berkeley's 'chiefest officer whose services he most employed'.[20] Rewards in money and land were piled on him by his employer. In 1350 he was awarded an annual retaining fee of £10.16*s*. 4*d*. Later he was granted rents from lands in the manor of Arlingham, along with the wardship of the heir of John Berkeley of Wick-by-Arlingham.[21] Cheltenham, a self-made man, became a prosperous landowner, acquiring manors at Little Marshfield and Purton in Lydney (both Glos.).[22] His administrative skill and powerful connections brought him to the attention of other employers. In 1339 the bishop of Worcester appointed him steward of all the bishopric's temporalities in the county of Gloucester.[23]

[16] For foresters' emoluments, see C. R. Young, *The Royal Forests of Medieval England* (Philadelphia, 1979), 159–64.

[17] Although there is no inscription on the monument, the identification is reasonably certain. William is referred to as 'of Pucklechurch' (*CFR 1391–9*, 176, referring to earlier documents); in 1337 he had founded a chantry in the church there (*CPR 1334–8*, 559). The manor was held by the bishop of Bath and Wells.

[18] TNA: PRO, JUST.3/127, m. 25.

[19] *Catalogue of the Medieval Muniments at Berkeley Castle*, ed. B. Wells-Furby (2 vols., Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Soc., Gloucestershire Record Series, 17, 18, 2004), i. 4, 15, 42, 174, 191, 233, 280, 301, 304, 420, 435, 439, 469, 472, 477, 478, 481, 485, 514, 529.

[20] Smyth, *The Berkeley MSS*. (Gloucester, 1883–5), i. 342.

[21] Ibid.

[22] *Catalogue of the Medieval Muniments at Berkeley Castle*, i. 474, 480. He broke up his estate in the 1360s, probably on the premature death of his son: ibid.

[23] R. M. Haines, *The Administration of the Diocese of Worcester in the First Half of the Fourteenth Century* (London, 1965), 142.

Figure 54. Pucklechurch (Glos.): William de Cheltenham, *c*.1350–5

Through Lord Berkeley's influence at court, he was regularly appointed to local office in Gloucestershire. Between 1336 and 1364 he served on the Gloucestershire bench and from 1351 as a justice of labourers; on no fewer than ten occasions he was elected a knight of the shire for Gloucestershire.[24] The only substantial appointment which eluded him was that of sheriff.

Someone of similar background to de Cheltenham was a Derbyshire esquire, John Cokayne (d. 1372), who is commemorated by the effigy at Ashbourne (Fig. 55).[25] Cokayne distinguished himself as a senior administrator in the service of the duchy of Lancaster. From the 1350s to his death, he was chief steward of the duchy's estates north of the River Trent first under Duke Henry, and later under Duke John.[26] The Cokaynes had been resident at Ashbourne since the middle of the twelfth century; it was only in John's time, however, that they rose to any prominence. John was a significant political figure in his native Derbyshire. For

[24] For his career in local administration, see *CPR 1334–8*, 131, 148, 201, 356, 370, 441; *CPR 1338–40*, 73, 77, 135, 503; *CPR 1340–3*, 310, 439, 446; *CPR 1343–5*, 72, 394, 415; *CPR 1345–8*, 35, 97, 241, 311, 376, 392; *CPR 1348–50*, 64, 162, 527; *CPR 1350–4*, 89, 91, 160, 284; *CPR 1354–8*, 227, 291, 295, 550; *CPR 1358–61*, 150, 219, 279, 409; *CPR 1361–4*, 208, 291. For discussion, see Saul, *Knights and Esquires* (Oxford, 1981), 157, 162.

[25] J. R. Planché, 'Monuments of the Cokayne Family in Ashbourne Church, Derbyshire', *JBAA* 7 (1852), 374–83.

[26] R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster* (London, 1953), 360.

Figure 55. Ashbourne (Derby.): John Cokayne (d. 1372)

some twenty years from 1350 he served on the local bench, and twice, in 1361 and 1362, he was elected to parliament.[27] Through Lancastrian influence he was regularly appointed to commissions of oyer and terminer, and for a year he served as sheriff of Lancaster.[28] By the time of his death in 1372 he had assembled a landed estate centring on the manor of Ashbourne, which he held on lease from the duchy. His two sons, one of them a judge, went on to establish successful knightly dynasties.

The man commemorated by the later of the two effigies at Pembridge (Heref.) was again someone with strong magnate connections (Fig. 56). He was almost

[27] *CPR 1348–50*, 173, 586; *CPR 1350–4*, 88; *CPR 1361–4*, 66, 292, 530; *CPR 1367–70*, 193; *CCR 1360–4*, 252, 439.

[28] *CPR 1343–5*, 175; *CPR 1348–50*, 586; *CPR 1354–8*, 65, 229, 230; *CPR 1358–61*, 76, 151, 278, 410; *CPR 1361–4*, 386, 287.

Figure 56. Pembridge (Heref.): John Gour and his wife, *c.*1380

certainly John Gour, a scion of a legal dynasty and an esquire who held a manor in the parish.[29] From the 1350s until his death in the late 1370s Gour was active in the service of the Mortimer earls of March, the most important landowning family in the central Marches, for most of that time serving as steward.[30] In 1360, when Earl Roger died, he was appointed keeper of the Mortimer estates in the Marches for the duration of the minority which followed.[31] His close connection with the Mortimers ensured him frequent appointment to public office in Herefordshire.

[29] Richard Symonds, writing in the 1640s, associated the effigies with the Gours: *Diary of Richard Symonds*, ed. C. E. Long (Camden Soc., 1859), 203. R. K. Morris, 'Pembridge and Mature Decorated Architecture in Herefordshire', *Trans. Woolhope Naturalists Field Club*, 42 (1977), 129–53, at 147–8, independently associates the effigies with the family on the evidence of the descent of the manors in the village.

[30] He is first found associated with Roger Mortimer on a commission of 1351: *CPR 1350–4*, 153. For his service with the Mortimers, see G. A. Holmes, *The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth Century England* (Cambridge, 1957), 45, 46, 69. He is found as a witness to Mortimer charters in BL, Harley MS 1240, fos. 43^{v}, 73^{r}.

[31] *CPR 1358–61*, 374, 454. He was also an executor of the earl's will: ibid. 495.

Figure 57. Crich (Derby.): William Wakebridge, *c.*1355

From 1356 to his death he served as a justice of the peace in the county, and from 1369 as a JP in Shropshire.[32] In 1360 he was named keeper of the temporalities of the bishopric of Hereford following the death of Bishop Trilleck.[33] It is evident from his appointments that he must have received a training in the law, perhaps through acting for his father, who was a serjeant.[34] On his tomb he is shown wearing a tall headpiece very similar to the puffed hat later worn by the apprentices; it is possible that his occupational standing corresponded broadly to that enjoyed in the next century by men of that rank.[35] For all his success locally, however, it is doubtful if he became a professional lawyer; his standing was principally that of a local landowner.

Another civilian whose career points to possession of legal know-how was William Wakebridge of Derbyshire (Fig. 57). Wakebridge is almost certainly the man commemorated by the fine effigy at Crich (Derby.). The Wakebridges were a minor, non-knightly family whose lands were gathered in two main parcels, one around Crich, the other to the north near Palterton. William founded two chantries

[32] *CPR 1354–8*, 227, 554; *CPR 1361–4*, 64, 292; *CPR 1364–7*, 145, 434; *CPR 1367–70*, 192, 196; *CPR 1374–7*, 136.

[33] *CPR 1361–4*, 106.

[34] John was almost certainly the son of Nicholas Gour, a serjeant who, on the evidence of the coif, can be identified as the subject of the other tomb in the church (see below, 274, and Fig. 65).

[35] For the apprentices, see below, 277–82.

in Crich church, the first in 1350 following the deaths of no fewer than seven of his relatives from the plague, and the second in 1362.[36] Unusually for a Derbyshire proprietor, he held no appointment with the duchy of Lancaster, the largest landowner in the county. However, despite his apparent lack of high-level support, he developed a highly successful career as an administrator in the north Midlands. From 1351 to his death he served as a justice of the peace in Nottinghamshire and at intervals in the same capacity in Derbyshire.[37] On numerous occasions he was appointed a justice of oyer and terminer to investigate local trespasses.[38] In 1362 he was elected a knight of the shire for Nottinghamshire.[39] By 1354 he had secured appointment as the Black Prince's serjeant to handle pleas in the lordships of Chester and Flint.[40] In later years he was often called on by local landowners to act in the office of attorney or feoffee. Among those whom he served in these capacities were Sir Thomas Furnivall, Sir John de Annesley, Sir Richard de Bingham, and John, Lord Grey of Codnor.[41] In the 1360s he acted as executor of Sir John de Longvillers' will.[42] With the development of his legal practice, and consequent growth of his means, he extended his landed interests, notably into Nottinghamshire, where he acquired the estate of Kneeton. On his tomb effigy he is not shown in any distinctive attire suggestive of a lawyer. Unlike Cokayne, he does not wear a coif; rather, he is shown in the normal dress of a civilian. Yet there can be little doubt that legal expertise lay at the root of his worldly success.

With so few of those commemorated by sculpted effigies firmly identified, it is difficult to offer generalizations about background other than by example; any attempt at a statistical analysis would be almost worthless. Yet for all the inadequacy of the evidence, a picture of sorts does emerge. It is clear that the group of civilians came from a variety of backgrounds. Some were established gentlemen, others sub-gentry, and others again semi-professionals; the categories mingled and overlapped; the semi-professionals, however, stand out. These men were generally lawyers in a loose sense, and often enjoyed strong ties with magnates. For the most part, they were of fairly affluent means; a sculpted effigy on a tomb chest did not come cheaply. Although they chose to be represented as civilians, they had more in common with the knights and rich esquires above them than with those below. They fell within, or lay on the edge of, gentle society.

[36] For the foundations, see *CPR 1348–50*, 543–4; *CPR 1367–70*, 86; and *The Cartulary of the Wakebridge Chantries at Crich*, ed. A. Saltman (Derbyshire Archaeological Soc. Record Series, 6, 1976). William died on 19 Mar. 1370: ibid. 6. He left no surviving issue, his heiress being his sister Cecily, wife of Sir John de la Pole: *Testamenta Eboracensia*, ii. 126 n.

[37] *CPR 1350–4*, 87, 92, 450, 451; *CPR 1354–8*, 62, 124, 226, 388, 555; *CPR 1358–61*, 69; *CPR 1361–4*, 66, 529; *CPR 1367–70*, 192, 195.

[38] *CPR 1350–4*, 161, 162, 164; *CPR 1354–8*, 386, 397; *CPR 1358–61*, 410; *CPR 1364–7*, 281.

[39] *CCR 1360–4*, 439.

[40] *Register of Edward, the Black Prince* (4 vols., London, 1930–43), iii. 180.

[41] *CPR 1350–4*, 130; *CPR 1358–61*, 61; *CPR 1361–4*, 161; *CPR 1364–7*, 3, 127, 129; *CPR 1367–70*, 40; TNA: PRO, C76/52, mm. 8, 13.

[42] *CPR 1361–4*, 396.

BRASSES AND MERCHANT GENTILITY

The series of civilian relief effigies, so striking a feature of fourteenth-century commemoration, draws almost to a close around 1370. The figures of Wakebridge, Cokayne, and Cheltenham, dating from *c*.1350–*c*.1370, are among the last.[43] Shortly afterwards, there are the effigies of Walter Frampton (d. 1388) at St John's, Bristol, John Otewich and his wife at St Helen's Bishopsgate, London, and an unknown civilian at Westley Waterless (Cambs.). After the turn of the century, the series dwindles to a trickle. There are good fifteenth-century examples at Old Cleeve (Som.), St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, and Lund (Yorks.); there is one from the early sixteenth century at Egloskerry (Cornwall). A number of the best 'civilian' figures of these years actually commemorate men of law: for example, the figures of Thomas Tickhill and his wife at Aston on Trent (Derby.) and Thomas Ricard and his wife at Harlaxton (Lincs.), both of alabaster.[44] Civilian incised slabs are still common. There are good examples at Grimsby (Lincs.), 1408, Stretton Sugwas (Heref.), 1473, and Scropton (Derby.), 1495. Best of all is the magnificent slab of Andrew Jones and his wife, *c*.1497, in Hereford Cathedral.

From the fourth quarter of the century, a marked shift in commemorative taste took place. The position once occupied by relief or semi-relief effigies in the market was taken by brasses. This shift formed part of the larger phenomenon of the rise to popularity in this period of brass memorials.

Before the mid-fourteenth century, as we have seen, brasses had been favoured chiefly by the better-off clergy and the knightly class. There is no indication that they had received much favour from the third estate. Even allowing for losses, only a small number of brasses appear to have been commissioned by urban clients. There are indents of two early cross brasses to civilians at St Frideswide's, Oxford (now Christ Church Cathedral), commemorating John de Colville, *c*.1273, and Nicolas de Coleshill (d. 1323), the latter specifically described as a burgess.[45] At East Wickham (Kent) there is an extant cross brass with busts to John de Bladigdon, *c*.1340, probably a Londoner who had acquired a country estate.[46] Brasses of pre-Black Death date to civilian rural proprietors are scarcely more common than to burgesses. Sometimes they take the form of small busts. At Langdon Hills (Essex) there are the indents of the busts of a civilian and lady, perhaps the king's serjeant James de Langdon and his wife, *c*.1285, while at Dorchester (Oxon.) there are similar indents, this time surmounting crosses, commemorating John de Lewknor

[43] Also of the 1360s is the fine figure, probably of Thomas de Sloo, at North Curry (Som.).

[44] These are discussed below, Ch. 11. To the extent that they commemorate lawyers, they stand in succession to the effigies of Wakebridge and the others; but the numbers are far fewer.

[45] J. Bertram, 'The Lost Brasses of Oxford', *TMBS* 11 (1973), 322–6.

[46] R. Griffin and M. Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses remaining in the County of Kent in 1922* (London and Ashford, 1922), 32, 184; H. W. Smith, 'Ancient Brasses at East Wickham, Kent', *The Antiquary*, 16 (1887), 159–60. 'Bladigdon' is Blendon in Bexley.

and his wife.[47] A close parallel to the despoiled Dorchester monument is found in the incised slab at Hemsworth (Yorks.) to Simon de Wudston and his wife, of 1319.[48]

The early civilian brasses were not only few; they were also lacking in artistic distinction. The slow emergence of civilian patronage offered little encouragement to producers to develop bespoke design-types. For the most part, civilian memorials followed the well-established model of clerical brasses. The small figure (or figures) of the commemorated would be placed in or above the head of a cross supported on a long stem with an inscription round the edge. This is the form taken by the brasses of John de Bladigdon and his wife at East Wickham and Nicholas d'Aumberdene at Taplow (Bucks.). On early civilian memorials there was little attempt to emulate the large full-length figure brasses of the gentry.

In the last quarter of the fourteenth century, however, civilian brasses not only became more numerous; they became much grander. Cross brasses declined in popularity, and brasses to civilians came increasingly to resemble those of the gentry. In most cases they were composed of medium-length standing figures, sometimes under canopies, with an inscription around the edge or at the base. The brass of William Frith, a London fishmonger, and his brother at Shottesbrooke (Berks.), *c*.1386, a good example of this new grander type, is on a scale unparalleled among earlier civilian memorials.[49] The two figures of Frith and his brother, nearly 5 feet high, stand under tall canopies with an octofoil device between the pediments and a marginal inscription, now lost, surrounding the whole. This beautiful brass, a product of London style 'B', draws on all the elements of the high-status gentry brass and appropriates them for the use of a London merchant and his brother.

The brass of the Boston merchant Walter Pescod (d. 1398) and his wife at St Botolph's, Boston, is still grander in conception. Pescod and his wife stand beneath a double-triple canopy and super canopy, the latter surmounted by an arcade of seven niches—from most of which the figures are lost—with an embattled cornice over the super canopy. The design of this remarkable memorial is closely paralleled in the lost brass of Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester (d. 1397), in Westminster Abbey, known from Sandford's drawing. Here, as on Pescod's brass, the central figure is flanked by inhabited side buttresses supporting an arcade of niches crowned by an embattled cornice. Pescod's brass went further even than Frith's in its appropriation of the essential features of the gentry brass; it was making a conscious effort to emulate the architectural character of the memorials of the most distinguished figures in the land. Whatever reticence the

[47] W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield and P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Essex* (2 vols., London, 2003), ii. 433, 435. For James de Langdon as a king's serjeant, see *CPR 1266–1272*, 50; Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, 152, which illustrates Dorchester.

[48] P. F. Ryder, *Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in West Yorkshire* (Wakefield, 1991), 28–9; S. Badham, 'Simon de Wudston's Incised Slab at Hemsworth, Yorkshire', *TMBS* 15 (1994), 215–21.

[49] For this brass, see N. E. Saul, 'Shottesbrooke Church: A Study in Knightly Patronage', in L. Keen and E. Scarff (eds.), *Windsor: Medieval Archaeology, Art and Architecture of the Thames Valley* (BAA Conference Transactions, 25, 2002), 264–81.

burgess elites had once shown in their tastes in memorialization had gone. Pescod and his fellows, confident of their social and economic importance, were bidding for commemorative parity with the episcopate and aristocracy.[50]

The same point can be made in connection with one of the best known brasses of the age, that of William Grevel and his wife at Chipping Campden (Glos.), 1401 (Fig. 58). Grevel's ranks among the very grandest of the Cotswold wool merchants' brasses. The figures are near life-size, and the entire composition stretches to over 9 feet. Grevel is shown in a long tunic, belted at the waist, with a mantle over it, and his wife in a kirtle and cotehardie. What is striking about the brass is the social ambition it exhibits. Not only is Grevel described as 'the flower of the wool merchants of all England'; heraldic blazons are shown on the series of four shields of arms along the top, eclipsing the traditional merchant's marks in the canopy.[51] The same intensity of ambition is displayed on the brass of Grevel's contemporary, the Calais stapler John Curteys of Wymington (Beds.), who died in 1391. Curteys's memorial is another of self-conscious grandiosity: it is canopied and enclosed within a marginal inscription. As on Grevel's brass, arms are displayed on the shields—although, in this case, one of the charges is derived from the subject's merchant's mark. Both Grevel and Curteys were engaged in making the transition from mercantile to landed society. Grevel, though he resided at Campden, had bought manors at nearby Milcote and Lasborough, while Curteys had bought a landed estate at Wymington.[52] Both men chose to display the symbolic trappings of gentility on their memorials.

The suggestion has been made that in England—or, at least, in London, its commercial capital—the urban elites showed less interest in the values and practices of chivalry than did their counterparts on the Continent.[53] At one level, there is certainly something to be said for the argument. Unlike the elites of Bruges, Ghent,

[50] The brass is illustrated in M. W. Norris (ed.), *Monumental Brasses: The Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society, 1894–1984* (Woodbridge, 1988), no. 88. Pescod was one of the leading merchants of late 14th-cent. Boston and a benefactor of the Guild of SS Peter and Paul (*CPR 1396–9*, 19–20). In 1386 he is recorded as importing alum, and in 1392–4 madder, iron, and herring (*The Overseas Trade of Boston in the Reign of Richard II*, ed. S. H. Rigby (Lincoln Rec. Soc. 93, 2005), 63, 72, 197, 203). In 1390 he was constable of the Boston staple (TNA: PRO, C67/23; I owe this reference to Stephen Rigby). In 1395 he was dealing in wool (*CPR 1391–6*, 627). His family held Pescod Hall in the north-east part of the town: P. Thompson, *The History and Antiquities of Boston* (Boston, 1856, repr. 1997), 222. He was also a member of the Holy Trinity Guild of Coventry, a town in which he had interests (*Register of the Guild of the Holy Trinity . . . of Coventry*, ed. M. D. Harris (Dugdale Soc. 13, 1935), 93).

[51] Grevel's was no empty boast. He was one of the most substantial dealers in the north Cotswolds, buying from, among others, the bishop of Worcester and selling to Italian companies: E. B. Fryde, *Peasants and Landlords in Later Medieval England* (Stroud, 1996), 87–104. Grevel also boasted of his citizenship of London on his epitaph.

[52] For Grevel's career, and his descendants' entry into the ranks of the gentry, see C. Whitfield, *A History of Chipping Campden* (Eton, 1958), 52–7. For Curteys, who originally came from Higham Ferrers, see *A Calendar of the Cartularies of John Pyel and Adam Fraunceys*, ed. S. J. O'Connor (Camden Soc., 5th ser. 2, 1993), 6 n. 30, 154.

[53] C. Barron, 'Chivalry, Pageantry and Merchant Culture in Medieval London', in P. Coss and M. Keen (eds.), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2002), 219–41.

Figure 58. Chipping Campden (Glos.): William Grevel (d. 1401) and his first wife. Rubbing of brass

or Lille, the Londoners tended to be spectators of, rather than participants in, the tournaments staged in their midst by Crown and aristocracy. Yet on the evidence of the larger civilian memorials it is clear that the richest of them were interested in something which closely overlapped with chivalry—gentility. We have seen how, at least to the fourteenth century, London aldermen aped the funerary practices of the nobility by arranging for a servant to present himself at the door of the church dressed in his late master's armour.[54] The commissioning by the elites of town and trade of grand gentry-style brasses can be seen as another expression of their desire to seek cultural and commemorative parity with the gentle classes. There can be little doubt that the lesser burgess class, particularly in the provinces, were broadly content with the traditional values and cultural manifestations of urban society. In London and a few other towns, however, their superiors appear to have aspired in some degree to absorption in the chivalric culture of the nobility.

It is worth noting that some of the most ambitious mercantile brasses are to be found in rural rather than in urban churches. We have already noted that it was by no means uncommon for rich Londoners to invest their surplus capital in the purchase of rural estates. The Frowicks, for example, a family of London mercantile origin, acquired a landed estate at South Mimms (Middx.), where generations of the family were to be buried. The Frowicks had no previous connection with South Mimms; they snapped up the estate because it happened to be on the market, and because it was close to London. A number of Londoners who bought land, however, did so to re-establish a presence in the areas from which they had originated. In the half-century after the Black Death, when the population fall created exceptional openings in the capital, a high proportion of the London elite were first-generation immigrants. Some of these men made remarkable fortunes for themselves—the mercer Adam Franceys, for example, who made a fortune in the later years of Edward III. Unlike the lesser gentry and men-at-arms, who returned home rich from the war, these Londoners rarely forgot their humble origins. Sometimes they founded schools or chantry chapels in the towns of their birth. John Lovekyn, a prominent fishmonger, added to the endowment of a chantry which his father had founded in his home town of Kingston on Thames.[55] It is to this background that we should interpret the Londoners' interest in commissioning memorials in churches outside the capital. John Curteys commissioned his brass at Wymington (Beds.) because he had bought an estate there, close to Higham Ferrers (Northants) where he had been born.[56] Richard Torrington, a successful wool exporter, was buried at Berkhamsted (Herts.), his native town and where he was later to contract a marriage with a local heiress.[57] Nicholas d'Aumberdene, a London fishmonger, commissioned a brass at Taplow (Bucks.), close to the manor

[54] *Liber Albus: The White Book of the City of London*, ed. H. T. Riley (London, 1861), 29; and see above, 231.

[55] D. Ward and G. Evans, *Chantry Chapel to Royal Grammar School: The History of Kingston Grammar School 1299–1999* (Oxford, 2000), 3–5.

[56] *Calendar of the Cartularies of John Pyel and Adam Fraunceys*, 6 n.

[57] R. Hutchinson (ed.), *Drawings of Monumental Brasses and Incised Slabs by the Waller Brothers, 1837–44* (London, 2001), 13.

of Amerden where he originated and from which he took his name. In some cases Londoners were commemorated in parishes where they had taken leases of the manorial demesne. In the early fifteenth century Thomas Blosme, lessee of the Westminster Abbey demesne at South Benfleet (Essex), was commemorated with his wife by a bracket brass in South Benfleet church.[58] Sometimes Londoners were commemorated twice, once in the capital and again in the church of another place with which they were associated.[59]

THE RURAL MARKET

The wide popularity which brasses enjoyed with the Londoners highlights the growing share of the market claimed by this form of memorial with the urban class generally. By the late fifteenth century brasses were filling the churches of York, Norwich, Bristol, and other cities.[60] Brasses had one great advantage over relief effigies: laid flush with the floor, they made no claim on space. Urban churches were often small and cramped, and space was at a premium. On occasion relief effigies were cleared from churches to make way for brasses. Stow records that at St Michael's Crooked Lane, London, Mayor William Walworth removed the alabaster tomb of his former employer Lovekyn, replacing it with a brass. He did so presumably to create space.[61]

Just as they won the favour of the townsmen, so brasses became popular with rural proprietors. From the seventy-year period *c*.1360 to *c*.1430 at least 80 brasses to rural civilians have come down to us, compared with only a handful from before the Black Death. Although a good many early civilian brasses have been lost, particularly from before 1360, it is clear that the market at this level was increasing in size rapidly. Most of the post-Black Death brasses were fairly small, many of them simple half-effigies; the pseudo-aristocratic brasses of the merchants were very much in the minority. It seems likely therefore that these brasses commemorate people of lower estate than had been the case with the high-quality relief effigies. Who were these people? And what was their background?

A minority, at least, of the brasses were commissioned by lesser manorial lords, proprietors of estates formed from manors which had broken up. Thomas Stokes (d. 1416), for example, who is commemorated with his wife by a small but exquisite brass at Ashby St Ledgers (Northants), was lord of the manor known as 'Stokes manor' in Ashby village.[62] Richard Charles (d. 1446), an esquire commemorated

[58] J. Dobson, 'A Re-discovery at South Benfleet, Essex', *TMBS* 12 (1979), 348–62.

[59] Sir Hugh Clopton (d. 1496), a Stratfordian who made his career in London, was commemorated both in London at St Margaret, Lothbury, and in his home town: J. Stow, *A Survey of London*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (London, 1908, repr. 2000), i. 283.

[60] For brasses at Norwich, both extant and lost, see F. Blomefield, *Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* (11 vols., London, 1805–10), iv; and for the lost brasses of some of the York churches, see BL, Lansdowne MS 919, fos. 14r–15v.

[61] Stow, *Survey of London*, i. 219.

[62] N. E. Saul, 'The Brass of Thomas Stokes and his Wife', in J. Bertram (ed.), *The Catesby Family and their Brasses at Ashby St Ledgers* (London, 2006), 76–82.

with his son by a brass at Hoo St Werburgh (Kent), held a manor in Hoo under the Lords Grey.[63] Richard de Hellesdon, commemorated with his wife by a brass with half-figures of *c*.1375 at Hellesdon (Norfolk), held a manor in Cringleford (Norfolk).[64] The civilian represented with his wife by half-figures at Upchurch (Kent) is probably Bartholomew de Thanet (d. after 1358), a proprietor who held an estate in Upchurch which later passed into the hands of the Londoner John Peche.[65]

These men, however, represent only a small proportion of those commemorated by civilian brasses after the Black Death. Far more, it seems, were drawn from the class of sub-manorial proprietors who prospered in the changed economic circumstances of the time. The rise in wages and fall in prices which followed the demographic collapse gave a definite edge to proprietors at this level over their grander rivals. As land flooded onto the market, they looked to add to their holdings. They snapped up vacant tenements; and they took leases on the manorial demesnes once the demesnes were broken up from the end of the 1380s. Where they believed it would be profitable, they made changes in land use, switching from traditional arable cultivation to pastoral husbandry. Provided they kept a check on costs, they stood a chance of producing crops more cheaply than the great lords had. It is men of this sort whose social aspirations Chaucer satirized in his portrait of the Franklin in the General Prologue of *The Canterbury Tales*. The Franklin was a prosperous, up-and-coming, proprietor, but rather self-conscious in his display of wealth.[66]

One good example of such a newly rich proprietor is found in Benet English, who is commemorated by a fine half-effigy of *c*.1350–60 at Nuffield (Oxon.) (Fig. 59). A member of a family of middling freeholders of Newnham Murren, he appears regularly in the records between *c*.1310 and *c*.1350.[67] He is first mentioned in July 1310, when he acted as mainpernor for a prisoner in Newgate.[68] Between this date and the late 1330s he frequently acted as a witness to local charters.[69] Interestingly, he used a seal with a semi-heraldic device, *ermine on a chief or, a demi lion issuant vert*, which later members of the family were to adapt as a coat of arms.[70] His relative affluence and, with it, his self-assertion brought

[63] For Richard Charles's will, in which he made modest provision for prayers for his soul and rather ampler provision for his wife's future well-being, see Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone: Rochester Consistory Court, DRb/Pwr 1, fo. 34r.

[64] *Feudal Aids*, iv. 444, 533, 589, 627; Blomefield, *History of the County of Norfolk,* x. 431.

[65] Bartholomew's activities in the land market are recorded in deeds of the 1340s and 1350s: *Catalogue of the Archives of All Souls College*, ed. C. Trice Martin (London, 1877), 55, 61, 65. For Peche's acquisition of the manor, which later passed to All Souls, see E. Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (2nd edn., 12 vols., Canterbury, 1797–1801), vi. 29–30.

[66] For the Franklin, see N. E. Saul, 'The Social Status of Chaucer's Franklin: A Reconsideration', *Medium Aevum*, 52 (1983), 10–26.

[67] He is last recorded on 2 Aug. 1350, when he attested a charter: *The Boarstall Cartulary*, ed. H. E. Salter (Oxford Historical Soc. 88, 1930), no. 112. English Farm, his property, is still on the map today.

[68] *CPR 1307–13*, 269.

[69] P. M. Briers, *History of Nuffield* (Oxford, 1939), 107–9.

[70] *The Goring Charters, 1181–1546*, ed. T. R. Gambier-Parry (2 vols., Oxfordshire Rec. Soc., 13, 14, 1931–2), i. 129–30.

Figure 59. Nuffield (Oxon.): Benet English, *c.*1360. Rubbing of brass

him to the edge of the office-holding elite. In the early 1330s he was serving as a coroner, but was disqualified on grounds of insufficiency; in a later writ, however, he was said to have held property on a life term.[71] He appears to have enjoyed a range of connections with the local gentry. He was often employed as a charter witness by Sir John de Marmion, lord of the neighbouring manor of Checkendon.[72] However, he did not make it into the ranks of the gentry himself, although his descendants were to do so later. He is to be seen primarily

[71] *CCR 1333–7*, 53, 79.

[72] *Boarstall Cartulary*, nos. 58, 61, 63–6, 69, 73. On one occasion he also appears alongside Sir John Bardolf: *Goring Charters*, ii. 172.

as an agriculturalist who benefited from the conditions of the mid-fourteenth century.

Another family which bettered itself in the conditions of the time was that of Petle of Downe in west Kent. John Petle (d. *c.*1400) and his wife Julian and Thomas Petle—either a son or brother—and his wife are all commemorated by brasses in Downe church. The two brasses are both very small and it is possible that they were laid at the same time. According to Nicholas Charles's notes of 1611, there were also inscriptions to members of the family in the stained glass windows.[73]

The Petles, like the Englishs, were members of the lesser gentry. They were not manorial lords—the manor of Downe belonged to Christ Church, Canterbury; none the less, they were substantial freeholders. From their deeds it is possible to trace their activities in the land market. In 1396 Thomas Petle acquired two crofts in Downe from a local proprietor, William Hunt, of Cudham.[74] A few years later, John Petle acquired lands at 'Little Pesfield', again in Downe, from another proprietor, John Ferthing.[75] In the 1420s John and Thomas Petle together received a quitclaim from one Peter Baker of Downe relating to lands they had acquired in the village.[76] The impression is given of a family actively engrossing its holdings at the expense of others in the village. Of particular interest is a letter from Elizabeth, Lady Say, of 1396 reciting that her steward had sold to Thomas Petle 10,000 bundles of firewood from her park at Bettrede for £10 with allowance for the charcoal from the trees.[77] Forty years later, in 1439, another John Petle is referred to in a pardon as a 'colyer', presumably someone dealing in charcoal.[78] Quite possibly the Petles are the first family of coal and fuel merchants to be commemorated by brasses in an English church.

More conventional in their economic activities were two prosperous freeholder families of Salle (Norfolk): one, the Boleyns, the ancestors of Henry VIII's queen, and the other, the Rooses. Thomas Boleyn (d. 1411), the donor of a window to Salle church, was a middling farmer, one of the newly prosperous, who worked his acres in the fields and added to them by purchase. His son Geoffrey (d. 1440), who is commemorated by a brass in the church, cut a more substantial figure, acquiring an estate in Stinton in Salle, and adding to the family's sheep flocks. Geoffrey was a contributor to the cost of rebuilding Salle church. Thomas Roos, a contemporary of Geoffrey's and an associate, was another sheep farmer, and perhaps a more ambitious one. In 1425 he was fined for keeping 500 sheep on Cawston common, when he should have kept only 200. Doubtless he had other flocks elsewhere. Sheep rearing was crucial to his economic well-being, and it is tempting to suppose that this was so for many of the rising freeholders of Salle.[79]

[73] BL, Lansdowne MS 874, fo. 39^{v}.

[74] *Calendar of Ancient Deeds* (6 vols., London, 1890–1915), v, no. C5044.

[75] Ibid., no. C5101. [76] Ibid., no. C5054. [77] Ibid., no. C5145.

[78] *CPR 1436–41*, 337.

[79] For the families of Boleyn and Roos, see W. L. E. Parsons, *Salle: The Story of a Norfolk Parish, its Church, Manors and People* (Norwich, 1937), 22–3, 46–8, 176–8. The Boleyn estate has

This handful of case studies sheds light on the economic circumstances of some of those commemorated by civilian brasses in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The men involved were in their different ways taking advantage of the opportunities opened by the fall in population after the Black Death. With demesnes leased, and the big landowners withdrawing from direct cultivation, the initiative could be seized by lesser and middling proprietors. We see them adding to their landholdings, refashioning agricultural units, and exploiting new sources of wealth. From the mid-fifteenth century it becomes common to find demesne lessees—farmers, as they were called—commemorated by small memorial brasses. William Morys, described on his epitaph as 'fermer' of the demesne at Great Coxwell, is commemorated by a brass in Great Coxwell church (Berks.).[80] Thomas Bedell, likewise described on his epitaph as a 'fermer', is commemorated by a brass at Denham (Bucks.). Thomas Goddard, who took a lease on the demesne at Aldbourne (Wilts.), is commemorated at Ogbourne St George (Wilts.).[81] In some cases, the estates which these men put together attained manorial status, at least in the eyes of their holders. The estate assembled by John Quek (d. 1449) and his son Richard (d. 1459) in the parish of Birchington (Kent), where they were buried, later came to be known as Queks manor.[82] Richard Quek left 10 marks for the glazing of a window in Birchington church.[83]

Not all of the civilians commemorated by brasses, however, can be accounted for in this way. Some of the men were not agriculturalists at all—or, at least, not primarily agriculturalists. The lesser gentry class of the day was akin to the biblical house of many mansions. Swept into its ranks were men from a variety of backgrounds other than agriculture: indeed, also from other geographical settings than the countryside. There were royal or magnate administrators, urban officials, country solicitors—even woolmen and clothiers. It is men from these backgrounds or occupations who swelled the market for civilian memorial brasses.

Typical of the administrator class was John Mulsho (d. 1400), an esquire, whose brass, now at Geddington (Northants), showing him and his wife kneeling at the foot of a cross with St Faith in the head is one of the most attractive of the period. John was the son of Henry Mulsho of Geddington, an active royal agent in Northamptonshire, who leased a number of properties in the county from the

been identified with the manor of More Hall in Salle: Blomefield, *History of the County of Norfolk*, viii. 272. Roos's brass is also in Salle Church.

[80] For the brass see W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Berkshire* (London, 1993), 52–3. The manor of Great Coxwell belonged to Beaulieu Abbey.

[81] For Goddard, see N. E. Saul (ed.), *Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval England* (Oxford, 1997), 170. There is at least one brass to a farmer of a whole manor. This is the inscription at Corringham (Essex) to Thomas at Lee (d. 1464), 'firmarius istius manerii': Lack, Stuchfield, Whittemore, *Monumental Brasses of Essex*, i. 199, 201.

[82] The brass of John Quek survives. It is small: W. D. Belcher, *Kentish Brasses* (2 vols., London, 1888, 1905), i. 13.

[83] Canterbury Cathedral Archives, Probate Court of Canterbury, Consistory Register C2, fo. 113^{r-v}. The will shows him to have been an associate of Roger Manston, an esquire, whom he appointed as his supervisor. Roger was presumably the son of Nicholas Manston (d. 1444), who is commemorated by a brass at St Laurence, Thanet (Kent).

Crown. His early years are ill documented. He emerges into the limelight in the late 1370s, when he embarked on a career which was to bring him in quick succession to the offices of justice of the peace, escheator (collector of the feudal revenues in the county), and deputy keeper of Rockingham Forest.[84] By the end of the 1380s he was developing close associations with a number of influential figures at court, notably Edward, earl of Rutland, later duke of Aumerle. Probably through the influence of his patrons, he was chosen to be sheriff of Northamptonshire in 1393, 1395, and 1397. In the light of his local importance, it was only to be expected that he would be elected a member of parliament for Northamptonshire; and he served no fewer than four times in this capacity. There are indications that he had received a legal training,—or, at least, that he had acquired a measure of legal expertise—for he often acted as a feoffee or attorney. However, he is not shown in legal attire on his brass.

Another active administrator shown as a civilian was Nicholas Carew (d. 1432) of Beddington (Surrey), the son of Nicholas Carew, keeper of the privy seal under Edward III.[85] Nicholas held a sheaf of responsibilities in his local area, serving as justice of the peace in Surrey from 1394 to 1413 and from 1417 to 1431 and as escheator in Surrey and Sussex from 1403 to 1404 and from 1406 to 1407. On a number of occasions, he was appointed to inquire into local trespasses and offences. His wealth and experience led to him being appointed twice as sheriff, the first time in 1391–2 and the second in 1400–1. In common with Mulsho, he was also elected to parliament, on five occasions for Surrey. Appropriately for a man of substance, Carew's brass in Beddington church is one of some opulence. It shows him and his first wife Isabel under a low canopy with an embattled cornice, with shields of arms above and below, and a marginal inscription surrounding the whole.

Related to the category of royal administrators is a second category, that of administrators and estate officials serving the nobility. A number of such men are commemorated by civilian brasses from before 1450, among them stewards, receivers, household officials, controllers, and lawyers. Although the monuments of these people were usually small, those commemorated were sometimes locally important.

John de Kingsfold, commemorated with his wife by a brass with half-figures at Rusper (Sussex), can stand as a representative of this group. John, a considerable figure in Sussex from the late 1350s to his death in or before 1383, owed his local influence to his connection with the most powerful magnate in the area, Richard, earl of Arundel. He frequently acted as an attorney for the earl and in 1376 was appointed as a feoffee of his estates.[86] On occasions he also acted as a feoffee or attorney to Walter, Lord Fitzwalter and Sir Gilbert Talbot.[87] Although he was

[84] *History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, ed. Roskell, Clark, and Rawcliffe (Stroud, 1992), iii. 804–6.

[85] Ibid. ii. 482–5.

[86] *CPR 1381–5,* 35; *CFR 1377–83*, 194; *Feet of Fines for the County of Sussex, from I Edward II to 24 Henry VII*, ed. L. F. Salzman (Sussex Rec. Soc. 23, 1916), no. 2331.

[87] *CCR 1354–60*, 204, 307; *CCR 1364–8*, 469; *CCR 1369–74*, 572; *CCR 1374–7*, 71, 197, 275, 457; TNA: PRO, C61/82, m. 12.

never appointed a JP, he was elected to parliament no fewer than four times for Surrey.[88] His landed endowment was small and, like the others in this group, he never became a knight.[89]

A couple of servants of the duchy of Lancaster, the largest private landowner in late medieval England, are commemorated by brasses. Henry Nottingham, an East Anglian, is commemorated by a modest brass (engraved *c*.1405) at Holme next the Sea (Norfolk) showing him with his wife and, below, an inscription recording his gifts to Holme church. Henry, a King's Lynn man and a lawyer who acted as clerk of the town, was appointed to the council of the duchy of Lancaster, on which he served for nearly a decade in Henry IV's reign. In 1399, in recognition of his expertise, he was awarded the important post of feodary of the duchy lands in Norfolk and Suffolk, carrying an annual retaining fee of 100*s*.[90] Robert Hatfield, the other Lancastrian functionary, was a contemporary of Henry's, and perhaps known to him. Robert and his wife are commemorated by a brass at Owston (Yorks.), engraved *c*.1409, on which he is shown wearing the Lancastrian collar of SS (Fig. 60). Robert had first become a Lancastrian retainer in the 1370s and rose to become controller of the household of Henry of Derby, the future Henry IV. In 1399 he was named as an executor of John of Gaunt's will.[91] He held lands at the manor of Owston itself and in the East Riding.

Estates stewards are a category well represented on brasses of the period. John de Harwedon (*c*.1400) was identified on a brass, once in Peterborough Abbey (now Cathedral), as steward of the town of Peterborough and shown wearing his mantle of office.[92] Roger Sencler (d. 1425), an esquire, was described as 'serviens'—steward or serjeant—of Lesnes abbey, on a small brass at Erith (Kent).[93] William Estfield (d. 1386), commemorated by an epitaph at Tickhill (Yorks.), was described with some pride as steward of Holderness and Tickhill under Queen Philippa and Edmund, duke of York.[94] John Ceysell (d. 1493), described as 'famulus' ('servant') of Sir John St Lo on a brass at Tormarton, is probably to be seen as a steward.[95]

[88] *CCR 1364–8*, 272, 481; *CCR 1374–7*, 536; *CCR 1377–81*, 106.

[89] He held the small manor of Kingsfold on the borders of Rusper and Warnham in west Sussex: *Feet of Fines for Sussex*, no. 1677.

[90] For Nottingham's career, see *CCR 1399–1402*, 575; *CPR 1399–1401*, 454; Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, 367, 597; Blomefield, *History of the County of Norfolk*, x. 331. He was dead by 1417: *CCR 1413–19*, 399.

[91] Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, 364.

[92] P. Heseltine, *The Brasses of Huntingdonshire* (Peterborough, 1987), 40.

[93] Sencler's will survives: TNA: PRO, PROB 11/3, fo. 34^{r-v}. In it he describes himself as 'serviens Abbatis et conventus de Lesnes', corresponding to the description on the brass. He left bequests to Lesnes Abbey and to the parish churches of Erith and Plumstead. He left two sums of 12*d*. to be divided among four poor folk from each of the parishes of Erith and Plumstead. He bequeathed 20*s*. to his sister Alice. He left the largest bequest, of 100 marks, to his son John, his heir, who was under age, provided he accepted the counsel of his executors till attaining his majority.

[94] The text is given by M. Stephenson, 'Monumental Brasses of the West Riding', *Yorkshire Archaeological Jnl.* 15 (1900), 56.

[95] Lack, Stuchfield, Whittemore, *Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire*, 430.

Figure 60. Owston (Yorks.): Robert Hatfield and his wife, *c*.1409. Rubbing of brass

These small civilian memorials include a number to individuals whose position in the social pecking-order seems to have been distinctly modest. At Letchworth (Herts.) is a brass with half-figures (*c*.1400) to a couple, William Overbury and his wife Isabel, who were both employed in the household of Joan, wife of the duke of Brittany, whom Isabel served as a lady-in-waiting;[96] the duke and duchess, exiles since the takeover of their duchy by the French, lived at Cheshunt near by. Lower still in the hierarchy was David Kidwelly (d. 1454), described on his epitaph at Little Wittenham (Berks.) as 'hostiacus', or usher, of the palace to the king. It is hard to be sure what responsibilities his post involved, but David was allowed the opportunity to supplement his income from employment in the honour of Wallingford.

[96] *Recueil des Actes de Jean IV, Duc de Bretagne*, ed. M. Jones (Rennes: 2 vols., Institut Armoricain de Recherches Économiques et Humaines, 1980), i, no. 227; *CPR 1377–81*, 392; *CFR 1377–83*, 275. Isabel drew an annuity of £20 as a reward for her services.

It is clear from these examples that the ranks of the civilian commemorated in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries included some very modest proprietors. Yet it is also clear that they included some fairly substantial ones. Nicholas Carew, commemorated at Beddington (Surrey), ranked as one of the wealthiest gentlemen of south-east England. It has been estimated that in 1412 his income from his properties in Surrey amounted to as much as £158; and, in addition, he drew an estimated £80 as a trustee of the Tregoz estates in Sussex.[97] Nicholas is the kind of proprietor who in the fifteenth century would normally have been represented on his tomb in armour. Certainly other men of his rank and background at the time chose to be shown armed—John Compton (d. 1424) at Dinton (Bucks.) and John Cely (d. 1426) at Sheldwich (Kent) being examples. The reality was that by the fifteenth century the divisions in the hierarchy of honour—whether defined vertically by occupation or horizontally by rank—had become so blurred that decisions on attire necessarily involved an element of subjectivity. Different patrons would arrive at different decisions after taking into account different considerations. Insofar as there were any generally agreed conventions which helped to decide matters, two can be singled out. The first turned on social connections: if a commemorated had been the fee'd retainer of a magnate, there was a case for him be shown in armour. The other, as we have seen, turned on the possession or otherwise of lordship: if a man was the lord of a manor, he could be shown in armour; if he was not, then, depending on the level of his wealth, the issue would remain open. Between them, these two considerations seem to have settled the question for most esquires who commissioned tombs.[98]

The case of one such esquire, Geoffrey Kidwelly (d. 1483), shown as a civilian on his tomb at Little Wittenham (Berks.), can be taken as illustrative of the point (Fig. 61). Geoffrey, a Welshman by extraction, came from a family of lesser administrative officials in the service of the Lancastrian monarchy. His father, David, had been the usher of the palace to King Henry VI. Geoffrey's career had started in the West Country, where he served from 1455 as co-receiver of the king's havenary in Plymouth and Cornwall, and later as controller of the customs at Southampton.[99] He moved to the middle Thames Valley in 1461, when he was appointed receiver of the honors of Berkhamsted (Herts.) and Wallingford (Oxon.).[100] Geoffrey was a man of moderate means. In his will he disposed of lands in Reading, Henley on Thames, Blewbury (Berks.), and Ipsden (Oxon.). He left his property in Reading to one John Crouchfield, and his property in Ipsden to William Bedwale and his wife.[101] He held no manors in his own right; Little Witttenham, where he resided, belonged to Abingdon Abbey. His wife Anne, who survived him, however, held property in her own name, owning two small estates in the villages of Blewbury and Upton, a few miles to the south of Wittenham. Geoffrey did not refer to these properties in his will because his only claim to

[97] *History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, ii. 482–5.
[98] See above, 231–2.
[99] *CPR 1452–61*, 228; *CPR 1461–7*, 514.
[100] Ibid. 9.
[101] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/7, fos. 68^{v}–69^{r}.

Figure 61. Little Wittenham (Berks.): Geoffrey Kidwelly (d. 1483)

them was *iure uxoris*. None the less, they helped him to cut a more substantial figure than his father had. To judge from his will, he lived in some style. He left the sum of £100 and all of his plate to his widow. He maintained a household of respectable size. He asked his widow to maintain his household establishment in existence for three months after his death. Crucially, however, the fact that he was not a lord determined that he should be attired as a civilian on his tomb. Across the river, at Thame Richard Quartermain esquire, lord of North Weston and a senior counsellor of Richard, duke of York, as he proclaimed on his inscription (*c*.1465), was shown on his brass in armour. Quartermain was an altogether grander figure in local gentry society.

THE WOOLMEN AND CLOTHIERS

Although civilian memorials were in most cases smaller and less elaborate than those of the knights and senior clergy, they were not necessarily less status-conscious. It

may not immediately be apparent that this is so. On many civilian memorials the deceased's station was not even given on the epitaph; John de Kingsfold and Henry Nottingham were not identified by station on theirs. But among the commercial and mercantile class there was much concern to record trade or mistery. Just as the nobility and gentry were preoccupied—indeed, obsessed—with office and rank, so the merchants and citizenry were equally preoccupied with trade. On memorials in the towns and semi-industrialized parts of England a host of occupations are encountered. At Northleach (Glos.) there are a woolman, tailor, and merchant, at Chipping Norton (Oxon.) a woolman, merchant, and ironmonger. In other churches vintners, dyers, grocers, tanners, goldsmiths, glovers, and bell-founders are all encountered—even on occasion a haberdasher, carpenter, and marbler.[102] Pride in estate was not confined to the country gentry.

Among those who prospered in trade it is the woolmen who stand out as the most assured and self-conscious. Their memorials are replete with the allusive imagery of their occupation. Merchants' marks are displayed on their shields and woolsacks are shown at their feet, while sheep graze on their grassy bases (Fig. 62). There is evidence of a pride in occupation on the woolmen's memorials which affords a direct parallel to the gentry's pride in their own calling, war. It is true, of course, that a delight in the imagery of trade was by no means confined to the woolmen. Vintners have tuns at their feet on brasses at Barton on Humber (Lincs.) and Cirencester (Glos.), while tailors have pairs of scissors at Northleach. Yet much the richest concentrations of such imagery are found on the woolmen's brasses. The examples at Northleach, Chipping Campden (Fig. 58), and Cirencester (Glos.) and Linwood (Lincs.) are justly celebrated.

The brasses of the woolmen are the by-products of a particular set of historical circumstances. It is not coincidental that the series begins in or shortly before 1400.[103] In the half-century to that time a series of changes in the fiscal economy had brought about the emergence of a significant class of native traders. The wool merchants were essentially middlemen.[104] Their business was to buy the wool clip from the producers—chiefly the great monasteries and the demesne lessees—and sell it to the exporters or local clothiers. Before the late fourteenth century such an intermediate class had scarcely existed. The normal marketing arrangement had been for the great producers—commonly the Cistercian monasteries—to buy up all the wool in their area (the *collecta*) and sell it to the exporters directly. These

[102] For a list of occupations, see A. C. Bouquet, *Church Brasses* (London, 1956), 182. The marbler is William West, identified as such on his parents' brass at Sudborough (Northants), and the unlikely figure of the carpenter, Richard Colmer (d. 1485) at St Peter, Thanet (Kent) (Belcher, *Kentish Brasses*, i. 95).

[103] The three earliest extant woolmen's brasses are those of John Curteys (d. 1391) at Wymington (Beds.), William Grevel (d. 1401) at Chipping Campden (Glos.), and an unknown merchant, probably Thomas Adynet (d. 1409), at Northleach (Glos.).

[104] For the role of the woolmen and the historical background to the brasses, see E. Power, 'The Wool Trade in the Fifteenth Century', in E. Power and M. M. Postan (eds.), *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1933); N. E. Saul, 'The Wool Merchants and their Brasses', *TMBS* 17 (2007). T. H. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1977), is mainly concerned with the period before 1400.

Figure 62. King's Lynn (Norfolk): Adam de Walsoken (d. 1349), merchant's mark

exporters were in most cases Italians, members of a trading community who had established an early dominance in the market through their sophisticated credit systems. After the 1350s, however, the Italians gradually withdrew, following a series of bankruptcies, paving the way for the emergence of the English merchants. The rise of the native middlemen was greatly assisted by changes in the market for wool which took place at the same time. Before the mid-fourteenth century the bulk of the wool clip had been exported, principally to the manufacturing cities of Flanders and Italy. In 1336, however, Edward III had imposed a heavy tax on wool exports, the *maltolt*, which sharply increased the cost of the wool to foreigners, while giving their English rivals the opportunity to undercut them in price. More of the wool now stayed in England. On the supply, or grower, side there was also a major change. In the fifteenth century the class of wool growers expanded rapidly following the leasing of the demesnes and the entry of many small-scale producers

into the market. The Cotswold wool merchants were called into existence as a group of intermediaries to link together this enlarged network of buyers and sellers. They bought from a diversified producer community and sold to customers who included both local clothiers and exporters based in London. Among the latter group were to be numbered the Cely family, whose correspondence with their main Northleach supplier, William Midwinter, does so much to illuminate the working of the wool trade in this period.[105]

The wool merchants, particularly those of the Cotswolds, had a very distinctive taste in memorials. They showed a consistent preference for brasses over incised slabs or relief effigies. They stuck firmly to the products of the London workshops, rarely looking to regional producers;[106] and they insisted on a lavish display of the imagery of their trade. The emergence of such clearly defined taste owed much to their closely knit character as a community. Most of the leading woolmen of the central Cotswolds were well known to one another. They were linked by close business ties, some of them, indeed, starting their careers as the partners or apprentices of others; they intermarried, and they served one another in the office of feoffee or executor. The range of connections can be illustrated by examples taken from the families commemorated by brasses in the most famous wool churches. At Northleach the Midwinters were related by marriage to their neighbours, the Bushes. Alice, John Bush's widow, married William Midwinter, the Celys' supplier; and surviving them both, she named her son Thomas Bush (d. 1526) as executor of her will. The Bushes in their turn were related to the Wenmans of Witney (Oxon.). Alice's daughter Agnes married Richard Wenman, a woolman and clothier, who is commemorated by a brass in Witney church.[107] The wool merchant community, moreover, was widely ramified. A number of the leading families established more than one branch. The Fortey family, for example, ran businesses in both Cirencester and Northleach. The senior branch was based in Cirencester, where they were dyers, while in the fifteenth century a junior branch was established at Northleach. John Fortey of Northleach (d. 1458) became a leading figure in his adopted village, where he rebuilt the nave of the church; yet he never forgot his Cirencester kin, naming one of them, a namesake John, as an executor.[108] Over in the eastern Cotswolds there were likewise two branches of the wealthy Hickman family. Robert Hickman (d. 1519) was based at Lechlade, while Walter (d. 1521), his younger brother or nephew, lived at nearby Kempsford. The Hickmans had ties with the Tames of Fairford, a few miles from Lechlade. Robert Hickman began his career as John Tame's apprentice and was

[105] For the Celys, see A. Hanham, *The Celys and their World: An English Merchant Family of the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1985).

[106] The most notable exception is the brass of Thomas Andrewe (d. 1496) at Charwelton (Northants), which is a product of the Coventry workshop. The Andrewe family, however, had properties near Coventry, and John Andrewe, Thomas's father, was a member of the town's Holy Trinity Guild: N. W. Alcock and C. T. P. Woodfield, 'Social Pretensions in Architecture and Ancestry', *Antiquaries Jnl.* 76 (1996), 65–6.

[107] For these connections see Alice's will (TNA: PRO, PROB 11/13, fo. 229^{r}) and Thomas Bush's (TNA: PRO, PROB 11/21, fo. 303^{r-v}).

[108] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/4, fo. 182^{r-v}.

later to serve as his executor, while Edmund Tame served as Walter Hickman's overseer.[109] Further west, there was another network of ties linking the Cirencester woolmen and clothiers with their counterparts in the industrial Stroudwater valley. John Benet, a Cirencester dyer who died in 1497, left a bequest to Edward Haliday of Minchinhampton, a cloth-making town close to Bisley where he held lands.[110] Benet and Haliday are both commemorated by brasses, the former at Cirencester, the latter at Minchinhampton.

Many of the wool merchants—and not only those of the Cotswolds—were affiliated to the fellowship of exporters known as the Company of the Staple. The Staple had come into being as a solution to the problem of how to manage the wool trade for the maximum financial gain to the king. Within years of its imposition the *maltolt*, Edward III's subsidy on wool exports, had established itself as a major constituent of English royal revenue. In a twelve-month period it raised nearly twice as much as a levy of the fifteenths and tenths on moveable property, the other fiscal mainstay of the Crown. Without the income from this source the king would have found it impossible to wage war abroad on the scale that he did. The wool tax, however, was not only lucrative; it carried the further advantage of providing security for the raising of loans. When a lender advanced money to the king, he could be assigned repayment on receipts of the subsidy at the exchequer. If the export trade were to be used in this way, however, it had to be so organized as to guarantee an uninterrupted flow of taxation. To this end, in 1363 a company of merchants was established at Calais, the Company of the Staple, to whose members the sole right of exporting the bulk of English wool was granted. The Company, which was initially limited in size, grew by the fifteenth century into a powerful monopolistic enterprise of several hundred traders with responsibility not only for trade but for enforcement of the bullion regulations. The coat of arms of the Staplers is one of the most familiar ensigns on all mercantile brasses. Good examples are found at Thame and Witney (Oxon.), Standon (Herts.), and St Olave, Hart St, London. The pride which the Staplers took in the display of their Company's arms affords further evidence of the merchants' delight in heraldry and pseudo-heraldry. It was as a natural development that in the sixteenth century members of incorporated City companies took to including their own companies' arms on their memorials. These had the vital function of attesting the standing of the deceased companyman in his mistery or profession.

So dominant is the impression left by the woolmen's brasses that it is easy to forget that many of the brasses found in the so-called 'wool churches' are not those of woolmen; they are actually those of clothiers. In a big urban church—such as Cirencester—the brasses of the woolmen are not uncommonly outnumbered by those of the clothmen. Even at Northleach, which was essentially a rural collecting centre, there is a brass to a tailor, William Scors, and a dyer and merchant, John Fortey. The activities of the more important woolmen were by no means confined

[109] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/19, fo. 185^{r}; PROB 11/20, fo. 155^{v}; S. Brown and L. MacDonald (eds.), *Life, Death and Art: The Medieval Stained Glass of Fairford Parish Church* (Stroud, 1997), 137. For John Tame's brass, see above, 234. [110] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/11, fo. 90^{r-v}.

to the gathering and selling of wool. Woolmen might trade as clothiers, drapers, and dyers, just as clothiers might keep sheep for grazing. In those areas where the cloth industry flourished—notably Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire, and Devon in the south-west, and Norfolk and Suffolk in the east—brasses to clothiers survive in large number. Notable examples are found at Tiverton (Devon), Bradford on Avon (Wilts.), Lavenham (Suffolk), and Coggeshall (Essex). Those commemorated were the great entrepreneurs of the trade. Thomas Horton, whose brass at Bradford on Avon (Wilts.) includes his merchant's mark, affords a good example. The younger son of John Horton, a minor clothier of Lullington (Som.), he built up a substantial business in and around Bradford. By the end of his life he owned property at Rode, North Bradley, Trowbridge, Tilshead, Chippenham, all in north Wiltshire.[111] Leland tells us that he built a 'very fair house' in the north-east corner of Bradford churchyard. He also owned country manor houses outside Bradford at Westwood and Iford. It was at Westwood manor that he made his will on 14 August 1530. He had commissioned his brass at Bradford some years before his death, when he had founded a chantry in the church.[112]

The series of civilian effigies has much to tell us about the self-image and aspirations of the English sub-knightly class in the late Middle Ages. Down to the mid-fourteenth century effigial monuments to civilians had generally been simplified versions of those of the knights and clergy. In most cases they were monuments of freestone. Although the majority showed a full sculpted effigy, in some areas, notably the north Midlands, the semi-effigial form was common. Those commemorated were usually fairly substantial figures; in some cases they were well-to-do esquires, high in magnate favour and active in the administration of the shires. After the Black Death effigies of this kind became fewer. The administrators and country lawyers whom they commemorated, aspiring to gentry status, chose in most cases to be represented by armoured effigies. At the same time, the lesser proprietors, minor professionals and townsmen came to be commemorated by brasses. The relative cheapness of brasses combined with their modest demands on space made them attractive to a broad patron class. In some parts of England, notably the Midlands, incised slabs were also popular. By the end of the Middle Ages a wider social group was being commemorated by effigial monuments than ever before. The forebears of these people would probably have been commemorated by cross slabs or not commemorated at all; many would have been buried outside. It was people of this sort who in the late Middle Ages were instrumental in transforming the English economy by their spending, their interaction with the market, and, above all, by their innovative approaches to land use.[113] Their consciousness of their economic importance may help to explain

[111] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/23, fos. 155^{v}–156^{r}.

[112] For Thomas Horton, see E. Kite, *The Monumental Brasses of Wiltshire* (London, 1860, repr. Bath 1969), 51–3; D. Sutton, *Westwood Manor, Wiltshire* (London, 1986), 11–13.

[113] C. Dyer, *An Age of Transition? Economy and Society in England in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2005).

their enthusiasm for effigial funerary commemoration. The signs are that they took a closer interest in commemoration than any comparable lay group elsewhere in Europe: at least, only in England do we find such an abundance of memorials to people of this level. It is true that a greater number of medieval monuments have been lost on the Continent than in England; none the less, the disparity is still striking. Quite possibly, in these unassuming memorials we are afforded an insight into the aspirations of a group who played a significant role in the shaping of modern English society.

11

The Monuments of Lawyers

By the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as literacy became more widely disseminated, many of the clerical and administrative tasks once performed by the first estate were taken over by members of a trained, educated lay elite. Towards the end of the Middle Ages occupations such as those of pleader, apprentice, and notary were emerging with a clear professional identity, the outward and visible sign of which was the wearing by those engaged in them of a distinct attire.

The professional laymen who were to attain the clearest and most visible presence in funerary sculpture were the lawyers. Some of the most striking late medieval monuments commemorate the elite of the legal profession—the judges and the serjeants. The ranks of the lawyers, however, came by the fifteenth century to include a range of practitioners with a less clearly defined identity than these senior figures. Most notably, at a local level there were the attorneys and apprentices. The monuments of these men are more difficult to identify than those of the elite who were distinguished by the wearing of the coif. In many respects, indeed, there is little to distinguish them from the effigial monuments of the gentry alongside whom those they commemorate lived and whose ranks they aspired to join. In the setting of local society the ranks of the lesser legal practitioners and the middling gentry overlapped. One of the main questions raised by the monuments of the lawyers therefore relates to the question of identity. In what ways did the lawyers seek to represent themselves on their monuments? To what extent did they develop an identity distinct from that of the gentry? And how did styles of funerary self-representation vary between levels of the profession?

THE MONUMENTS OF THE JUDGES

By the middle of the thirteenth century a well-developed structure of courts administering royal justice had emerged in England. The oldest court, and the one from which the others were to spring, was that of the exchequer, which by the 1160s or earlier was hearing business in regular twice-yearly sessions at Westminster. By the 1190s the volume of business coming before the court was so great that a separate bench for the hearing of cases unrelated to its financial business was established. This was the tribunal later to be known as the court of common pleas. In or before 1234 a complementary bench, the court of king's

bench, was established with responsibility for handling pleas which could plausibly be represented as of special interest to the king. Late in Henry I's reign it became the custom for groups of the king's justices to go on wide-ranging visitations of the shires known as eyre visitations. These visits were held typically every seven years and they involved the hearing of all manner of pleas brought before the justices by the lower jurisdictions. From the early fourteenth century the functions of the eyre were increasingly taken over by other tribunals, notably the justices of trailbaston, the justices of assize and gaol delivery, and the periodic itinerations of the court of king's bench. By the 1330s the eyre was effectively defunct, surviving only in the semi-autonomous border lordships. Towards the end of Henry III's reign a new tribunal had made its appearance—the keepers, later the justices, of the peace, a group made up of substantial local gentry and a minority of professional justices. By the fourteenth century the JPs, panels of whom were appointed in every English county, were acquiring an increasing range of powers, in particular responsibility for enforcing the labour laws. In the longer term they were to secure a significant place in the development of English judicial administration.

The three common lawcourts of king's bench, common pleas, and exchequer were staffed by justices who were appointed for their specialist knowledge of the law.[1] By Henry III's reign a group of trained men had emerged who made a career out of judicial service to the Crown. Commonly these men rose to eminence through personal service to their predecessors, usually as clerks or keepers of writs. Thus the distinguished justice Ralph Hengham served a long apprenticeship as clerk to Giles de Erdington before his promotion to the bench in the early 1270s. By the same period, a class of professional pleaders had come into existence in the courts—the serjeants, as they were called: men of legal expertise who acted on behalf of their clients and spoke for them at the bar of the court (hence the modern term 'barristers'). By the end of the fourteenth century the serjeants constituted an order, or society, which enjoyed a monopoly of practice in common pleas. Entry was by means of an elaborate ceremony which included the giving of gold rings, the taking of an oath, and the making of a plea or 'count'. It was to be a characteristic of the English legal system that the justices of the central courts were recruited predominantly—from the mid-fourteenth century exclusively—from the ranks of the serjeants. In the course of the late Middle Ages a new group of professional legal practitioners emerged into the limelight, the apprentices. These were men who were originally students of the law, observing and taking notes from the serjeants, but who acquired the right to practise as lawyers in their own right. Generally they provided services of advocacy comparable to those given by the serjeants but in courts other than common pleas. By the sixteenth century they were beginning to eclipse their senior colleagues in importance, and it is from these men rather than the serjeants that the modern barristers are descended. It was also in the late medieval period that legal specialists in the shires first made their appearance. As early as Edward I's reign specialist attorneys are found acting for clients in the

[1] For the early lawyers, see P. Brand, *The Origins of the English Legal Profession* (London, 1992).

county courts, and by the early fifteenth century something like a 'solicitor' class had emerged providing non-courtroom services for those who hired them.

All levels of the legal profession are represented on surviving monuments of the Middle Ages. The most distinctive are the monuments of the justices of the three benches. Many of these are richly decked out in the trappings of status. At Long Ashton (Som.) Chief Justice Choke (d. 1486) is commemorated by a freestone effigy under an elaborately carved projecting canopy. At Harewood (Yorks.) Justice Gascoigne (d. 1419) is commemorated by a fine alabaster tomb chest with effigies and standing angels on the sides. At Deerhurst (Glos.) and Graveney (Kent) Justices Cassy and Martyn respectively are commemorated by big canopied brasses showing them with their wives (Fig. 64). At Brightwell Baldwin (Oxon.) Chief Justice Cottesmore (d. 1439), a contemporary of Martyn's, is honoured by two brasses, one a large canopied composition on the floor, the other with kneeling figures on the wall (Fig. 29). At Prestwold (Leics.) Justice Neale (d. 1486) is commemorated by an incised slab of considerable richness showing him and his wife under canopies. It is sometimes possible to detect the influence of client networks on the formation of taste. In the early years of Henry VI's reign three senior justices were commemorated by near-identical effigial brasses from the same London workshop, style 'B'.[2] In the small, closely knit world of the judiciary it is only natural to find one patron's taste being shaped by another's.

From the mid-fourteenth century judges are invariably represented in the distinctive attire of their office. How and when this attire first emerged are not altogether clear. The similarity of the sleeved tabard of the serjeants to the habit worn by the holders of some Oxford degrees has been interpreted as pointing to an origin in academic dress.[3] However, the mantle worn by the judges in the fifteenth century has more in common with the official habit of civic officers, pointing instead to a source in urban society. Since the judges were all laymen by the fifteenth century, it may well be more plausible to look for an origin in the secular world than in the academic. Whatever the origins of the habit, its importance in a commemorative context was that it constituted a mark of rank, and it was valued as such by those who wore it. From the beginning of the fifteenth century it was usually in their official habit that judges and serjeants were depicted on their tomb effigies.

The precise form of the judicial habit changed considerably in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The effigy of Sir John Stonor CJCP (d. 1354) in Dorchester Abbey (Oxon.) shows what it looked like for much of the fourteenth century (Fig. 63). Stonor is shown in a knee-length collobium with wide elbow-length sleeves over a cassock extending almost to the ankles and a coif on his head. It was in very similar dress that Ralph Hengham CJCP had been shown on a brass of *c*.1311 in St Paul's Cathedral, now lost, but recorded by Dugdale.[4] It was in much the same dress again that Sir John de Stouford JCP was shown on

[2] The justices are Cottesmore and Martyn, and Sir John Juyn, chief justice of King's Bench.
[3] J. H. Baker, *The Order of Serjeants at Law* (Selden Soc., Supplementary Series, 5, 1984), 69.
[4] Illustrated in Coales (ed.), *Earliest English Brasses*, fig. 63.

Figure 63. Dorchester Abbey (Oxon.): Sir John Stonor (d. 1354)

his wooden effigy at West Down (Devon) shortly after the middle of the century. In the period from 1350 to 1400, however, a significant change was made to the habit. The judges gave up the collobium in favour of a cloak or mantle, known as the 'chlamys', fastened over the right shoulder. This was first depicted on the brass, formerly in Peterborough Abbey (now Cathedral), of Sir Robert Thorpe CJCP (d. 1372).[5] A quarter of a century later it was shown on the brass of Sir John Cassy CBEx at Deerhurst (Fig. 64), and it appears on all later medieval effigies of judges. Beneath the mantle, the cassock was still the main bodily garment, and the coif remained the staple headpiece.

The stages in the emergence of this habit can be traced in the documentary records of the Crown. In 1292, in the first record of the distribution of livery to the judiciary, the keeper of the great wardrobe was authorized to issue to the judges robes of lighter cloth for their summer wear and of heavier cloth for their winter, in each case with hoods.[6] In the 1340s, when letters authorizing the issue of robes were again copied on the rolls, similar instructions were given. The keeper was ordered to deliver to the judges robes of short cloth and sendal for the summer, and of short cloth and budge and miniver for the winter, again in each case with

[5] BL, Add MS 71474, fo. 121r.

[6] W. N. Hargreaves-Mawdsley, *A History of Legal Dress in Europe until the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1963), 46.

Figure 64. Deerhurst (Glos.): Sir John Cassy (d. 1400) and his wife. Rubbing of brass

hoods.[7] Green cloth seems to have been preferred for the robes of the puisne justices and the chief baron, and green taffeta for those of the two chief justices, at least in summer. In the second half of the century details of the distribution of livery appear regularly in the accounts of the keeper of the great wardrobe.

The evidence of the wardrobe accounts is supplemented by a limited amount of pictorial evidence. In miniatures of courtroom scenes in legal texts of this date, judges are commonly shown in the distinctive long cassock and collobium, and wearing the coif as a mark of office. In some respects the evidence of the manuscripts is not altogether consistent: sometimes judges are shown with hoods while on other occasions they are not. There can be little doubt, however, that by the early fourteenth century judges were wearing a set of robes which identified them as representatives of royal authority. The character of their clothing changed around mid-century with the discarding of the collobium. Yet, whatever the particular form taken by the habit, its adoption by the judges made it one of the attributes of their office.

What is not altogether clear is how important the visual representation of their attire was to the judges' social identity. On the evidence of their surviving monuments, for the fourteenth century and perhaps later there may be grounds for scepticism. While some of the judicial effigies of the late Middle Ages depict them in professional habit, others depict them in the normal attire of rank. At Hanbury (Staffs.) Sir Henry Hambury, a justice of the Irish bench in the 1320s and a justice of king's bench from 1330, is commemorated by an effigy showing him in armour.[8] A generation later at Walsall (Staffs.) Sir Roger Hillary JCP (d. 1356), a judge who, like Hambury, migrated from the Irish to the English bench, was likewise commemorated by an effigy in armour, in this case a brass (now lost).[9] At Rougham (Norfolk) in 1472 Sir William Yelverton JKB combined the wearing of armour and a livery collar with the judicial mantle and coif.[10] This group of effigies does not appear to have been unique. At Cobham (Kent) Sir John Cobham the younger (d. 1300), an exchequer baron, was apparently represented by a conventional armoured effigy, now lost.[11] At Easby Abbey (Yorks.) in the 1330s Sir Henry Scrope, chief baron of the exchequer, was commemorated by an effigy which showed him with a shield suspended from his neck: a feature which again points to an effigy in armour.[12] These examples suggest that among some of the judges of knightly descent there was a preference for more traditional modes of representation. Even when official robes were worn in the courtroom, it was in armoured attire that these men wished to be shown on their tomb effigies. In the thirteenth century the question of commemorative etiquette had hardly arisen. Most of those who made up the judiciary were clerics, not laymen; accordingly, it

[7] *CCR 1346–9*, 20, 125, 194, 445.

[8] C. Blair, 'The Date of the Early Alabaster Knight at Hanbury, Staffordshire', *CM* 7 (1992). For Hambury's career, see *ODNB* 24. 743.

[9] Baker, *Order of Serjeants at Law*, 70 n., 518.

[10] Norris (ed.), *Monumental Brasses: The Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society* (1988), no. 200.

[11] Saul, *Death, Art and Memory*, 16–17, 82.

[12] Baker, *Order of Serjeants at Law*, 70 n.

was as members of the clerical estate that they were shown on their monuments. Elias de Beckingham (d. *c*.1306), for example, was represented in clerical vestments on a brass, of which the indent survives, at Bottisham (Cambs.).[13] The problem of commemorative etiquette only arose in the fourteenth century when the judiciary was laicized and robes of livery were introduced to distinguish the judges from those on whom they passed judgement.

What encouraged the regular adoption of formal judicial attire on monuments from the late fourteenth century was a combination of factors. The most important was perhaps the sharpening of the identity of the three judicial benches. By the reign of Edward III the judges had emerged as the elite of the legal profession. They were the possessors of technical expertise, the members of an honourable estate, and the holders of patents of appointment under the Crown. Along with the serjeants from whom they were recruited, they made up the 'order of the coif', a body separated by occupation and attire from other legal practitioners. In these circumstances, the distinct habit of the judges acquired the character of a mark of status and rank. On memorials it could take the place of armour as an outward and visible sign of the deceased's standing.

The second factor was one particular to the conventions of effigial representation: the desire to achieve correspondence between effigial attire and the details of office-holding recorded in epitaphs. Once it became common, as it did in the fourteenth century, to introduce evidence of status in the epitaph, then effigial representation had to be adjusted to take account of this. The process can be seen at work on the memorials of the university graduates. Whereas in the early fourteenth century graduates had usually been shown in ordinary clerical habit, by 1400 they were generally shown in the habit appropriate to their degree: the reason being that details of their degrees were given in their epitaphs.[14] The same process almost certainly helps to explain the adoption of formal judicial attire on judges' monuments. Once the details of office were recorded on inscriptions, as they were by *c*.1400, it made sense to depict the commemorated in the habit appropriate to that office.

THE MONUMENTS OF THE SERJEANTS

From the mid-fourteenth century to the late seventeenth there survives a series of monuments to serjeants at law—that is, to the pleaders in the court of common pleas. The earliest to show the subject in his distinctive attire is the freestone effigy at Pembridge (Heref.) which probably commemorates Nicholas Gour (d. *c*.1360–70) (Fig. 65).[15] Later examples are provided by the brasses at Checkendon (Oxon.) to John Rede (d. 1404), at Cople (Beds.) to Nicholas Rolond, *c*.1410,

[13] Lack, Stuchfield, Whittemore, *Monumental Brasses of Cambridgeshire*, 13.
[14] See above, 202. [15] For Gour, see Baker, *Order of Serjeants at Law*, 157, 514.

Figure 65. Pembridge (Heref.): a serjeant, probably Nicholas Gour, and his wife, *c*.1370

and at Gosfield (Essex) to Thomas Rolf (d. 1440).[16] Sixteenth-century examples are found in the brasses of John Brook (d. 1522) at St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, and John Newdigate (d. 1545) at Harefield (Middx.).[17]

The dress of the serjeants was closely related to that of the judges. By the early 1400s it consisted of a long robe or cassock, a hood, the familiar collobium or tabard usually with two tongue-shaped lapels at the neck, and a coif and fur collar.[18] Writing in the 1460s, Fortescue indicates that the habit was normally rayed or particoloured. What distinguished the serjeants' attire from that of the judges was that it did not include the cloak or mantle. When the judges adopted the mantle, they abandoned the collobium, leaving it the exclusive dress of the serjeants.

[16] John Rede at Checkendon is shown without the coif. There can be no doubt that he was a serjeant, however: he was described as such on his epitaph; for his creation, see *CPR 1396–9*, 28. The brass at Cople is a retrospective commission; Nicholas Rolond was retained by Westminster Abbey as a 'narrator' or pleader in 1306: Baker, *Order of Serjeants at Law*, 14 n., 71.

[17] For a list, see H. Druitt, *A Manual of Costume as Illustrated by Monumental Brasses* (London, 1906), 229–31.

[18] Baker, *Order of Serjeants at Law*, 68–72.

The serjeants' dress, like that of the judges, seems to have evolved in the course of the fourteenth century. In the fifty years to 1350 the serjeants gained greatly in cohesion and group identity. Sometime between 1300 and 1330 they secured a monopoly of the right of pleading in the common bench. As with the judges, however, growing professional cohesion did not immediately translate into a distinct visual identity on their tombs. Very few monuments to serjeants who were not promoted to the judiciary have come down to us from the fourteenth century. At least one extant effigy to a serjeant who remained at that rank, however, shows him in no distinctive attire. This is the effigy in Ham Hill stone to Henry Power, *c*.1345, and his wife at Limington (Som.).[19] Power, who was called to the rank of serjeant in 1329 or 1330, is shown in the ordinary dress of a civilian; he wears no collobium; and his hood is the ordinary civilian hood. The only feature distinguishing his effigy from other civilian effigies of its type is the sword by Power's side. Nothing beyond this attribute indicates the burial beneath of someone of official status or rank.

The effigy at Limington needs to be considered alongside another at a church in the same area. This is the very similar effigy at Trent (Dorset), commemorating John Trevaignon JCP, *c*.1335 (Fig. 66).[20] Trevaignon was a professional lawyer who practised as a serjeant for twenty years before his promotion to the common bench in the year before his death. Trevaignon's effigy shows him in a long robe, similar to a cassock, a hood slung over his right shoulder and a coif on his head; at his side is a sword, suspended from a loose belt or girdle. As with Power's effigy there is little to indicate the subject's professional status. The inclusion of the coif is the only feature identifying the subject as a man of law, the presence of the sword being of uncertain meaning. The effigy is best seen as a variant on the standard effigy of a civilian. A third figure which belongs to the same group is to be found at Glanvilles Wootton (Dorset).[21] This commemorates a local proprietor, Henry de Glanville, an esquire, and can be dated *c*.1344. Like the other two effigies, it shows the commemorated with the sword. It is not clear whether Glanville was of the standing of a lawyer.

All three effigies, exhibiting similar characteristics and in churches close to each other, were probably the work of the same sculptor or school of sculptors. The use in each case of Ham Hill stone points to a workshop which operated in the Yeovil area of south-east Somerset. The sculptor or sculptors employed a particular set of conventions in the representation of men of lesser gentry or professional standing. These conventions involved the depiction of the commemorated as a civilian with

[19] B. and M. Gittos, 'The Medieval Monuments of Limington, Somerset', *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, 33 (1988), 696–703.

[20] There is no inscription on the monument, but the identification with Trevaignon is almost certain. He held the manor of Adber in Trent and a manor in Sandford Orcas, the adjacent village: *Feudal Aids*, iv. 342, 343; *Feet of Fines for the County of Somerset, 1 Edward II to 20 Edward III*, ed. E. Green (Somerset Rec. Soc. 12, 1898).

[21] The effigies at Trent and Glanvilles Wootton are considered by G. Dru Drury, 'Fourteenth Century Civil Costume as Represented by Three Dorset Stone Effigies', *Proc. of the Dorset Nat. Hist. and Arch. Soc.* 29 (1952), 55–9.

Figure 66. Trent (Dorset): a serjeant, probably John Trevaignon, *c.*1335

a robe and hood, and a sword slung at his side to indicate status. The homogeneity of the figures and the distinctiveness of their design together indicate the role of artistic convention in shaping the details of effigial representation. However precisely the client might draft his instructions to the sculptor, those instructions would be subject to interpretation and reinterpretation in the light of the particular traditions in which the sculptors had been brought up and trained. If the effigies of the fourteenth-century serjeants sometimes present a rather conservative image of their subjects, it may be because the habits and conventions of those who sculpted them were themselves rather conservative.

When we turn to the later effigies of serjeants, we find that, like the effigies of judges, they became more standardized. In most cases it was usual for serjeants to be shown in the dress appropriate to their rank. The serjeants' collobium, like the judges' mantle, conveyed a clear message; it identified the subject as a member of an elite order. From time to time, however, other modes of attire were represented.

At Shillingford St George (Devon) Sir William Huddersfield (d. 1499) was shown on a small rectangular brass in armour and a tabard with his second wife, who was likewise in heraldic attire. Huddersfield had enjoyed a long and distinguished career in law. Admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1456, he rose to the rank of attorney-general in 1478 and recorder of Exeter in 1483–4.[22] Given his standing in his profession, the choice of armour for his effigy seems somewhat surprising. It is possible that, as with the sculptors at Ham Hill, workshop practice may have played a role in shaping modes of representation. The brass is a product of a local West Country workshop, and the engraver may have been unfamiliar with the professional attire of lawyers; on the other hand, it is almost certain that clear instructions would have been given by the patron in the contract. A more plausible explanation for the choice is that the brass represents Huddersfield's widow's sense of her husband's position in the world. On the evidence of the lady's costume the brass can be dated to the mid-1510s, well over a decade after Huddersfield's death, making Huddersfield's widow, Katherine, the likely patron. Lady Huddersfield, a member of the aristocratic Courtenay family, would have wanted to emphasize her and her husband's high standing in the world. In 1481 Huddersfield had acquired the manor of Shillingford, just south of Exeter, where he and his wife established their main residence.[23] In all probability, like others of their rank, they entertained ambitions of founding a gentry dynasty there. If that was the case, those ambitions were to be dashed. The Huddersfields left only daughters and coheiresses to succeed them, and their property passed to another family. It may well be for that reason that gentry-style representation on their memorial mattered so much to them.

THE MONUMENTS OF APPRENTICES

A number of late medieval monuments commemorate members of the group who were to supplant the serjeants at the bar, the apprentices at law. The apprentices, like the serjeants, were pleaders. Contrary to the impression given by their name, they were neither young nor at the learning stage; they were simply of lower rank. Their skill lay in advocacy. Once the serjeants gained a monopoly of the right to plead in common pleas, it was the apprentices who took their place in the other two courts of common law. In the provinces a body of apprentices, which partially overlapped with their peers in London, built up substantial portfolios of work as legal consultants. These men practised in the county courts, served as JPs of the quorum, acted as stewards of religious houses, and generally offered informal legal advice to major landowners. How many apprentices there were in late medieval England is hard to say. A list drawn up in 1518 for Cardinal Wolsey claimed that there were 37 practising in the courts at Westminster and twelve who were 'absent',

[22] *CPR 1476–85*, 37, 137; J. C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament, 1439–1509* (2 vols., London, 1936), ii. 475–6.

[23] TNA: PRO, CP25(1)46/92/47. I am very grateful to Dr Hannes Kleineke for advice on Huddersfield's career.

making about 50 in all.[24] To judge from their wills, they were a fairly closely knit group who turned to their fellow apprentices for friendship and support. Many would have been members of one of the inns of court in London.

The apprentices form a somewhat elusive group in the funerary sculpture of the period. They were entitled to wear neither the coif nor the collobium. They lacked the status of the judges and serjeants; and very little is known about their dress. One brass which specifically identifies an apprentice as such holds the key to identifying the memorials of others. This is the brass of John Edwards (d. 1462) at Rodmarton (Glos.). Edwards is described on the epitaph accompanying his figure as 'apprenticius in lege peritus', 'a learned apprentice in the law'. He is shown in conventional civilian attire but wears a distinctive turban-shaped hat. On the evidence of this attribute, at least two other brasses of apprentices can be identified. The first is a brass of about the same date as Edwards's at St Peter's, Chester, *c*.1460, now badly worn and with the inscription illegible. It is very similar to Edwards's and shows the subject in a turban-shaped hat. The other is the brass now lost, but of which the indent survives, at Graveney (Kent) to Thomas Borgeys (d. 1452). In this case too the tell-tale feature is the outline of the turban-shaped hat in the stone.[25]

On the evidence afforded by these three brasses, a number of relief monuments of apprentices can be identified. In nearly every case the figures have been described as those of civilians; the attribute of the hat, however, identifies the subject as actually an apprentice. The earliest of the group is the alabaster monument of a man and his wife holding hands at Aston on Trent (Derby.), *c*.1430, a product of the Prentys and Sutton workshop.[26] The male figure is attired in a high-collared cassock-like robe, with wide sleeves, which falls to the ground without a belt; and on the head is worn the distinctive hat. The person commemorated is almost certainly Thomas Tickhill, a London attorney and administrative official of the duchy of Lancaster, who served as a JP in Derbyshire and acquired a landed estate near Aston.[27] He died in about 1430, a date which would accord well with the stylistic evidence of the monument. In his will of 1419 Tickhill requested burial in the church of St Laurence Jewry, London.[28] He was to live for another ten years, however, and the likelihood must be that he changed his plans. On the evidence of the costume of the male figure there can be little doubt that the monument is his.

From a few years later comes the alabaster monument of a man and his wife, *c*.1435, at Harlaxton (Lincs.) (Fig. 67). In this case too the male figure is shown in a long robe with wide sleeves and a high collar, and on the head is worn

[24] N. Ramsay, 'What was the Legal Profession?' in M. A. Hicks (ed.), *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1990), 67.

[25] Griffin and Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses in the County of Kent*, pl. 27.

[26] C. Ryde, 'Chellaston Standing Angels with Shields at Aston on Trent', *Derbyshire Arch. Jnl.* 113 (1993) 69–90.

[27] For his career, see M. Jurkowski, 'Lancastrian Royal Service, Lollardy and Forgery: The Career of Thomas Tykhill', in R. E. Archer (ed.), *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century* (Stroud, 1995), 33–52.

[28] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/2B, fo. 352^{r-v}.

Figure 67. Harlaxton (Lincs.): Thomas Ricard (d. 1433)

the distinctive tall hat. The only significant difference between this figure and that at Aston is that here the robe is contained by a narrow belt round the waist, from which a purse is hung. The person commemorated can be identified with some certainty as Thomas Ricard. In his will, made in October 1433, Ricard asked to be buried in Harlaxton church 'under a marble stone'.[29] He appears to have been a man of more than adequate means. Among his bequests were a gift of ten marks to pay for a new window in Harlaxton church, and a generous £20 for the repair and improvement of the roads around his village. He established a chantry in Harlaxton church for the benefit of his soul and those of his parents, which he said was to be served by a chaplain to receive an annual stipend of £5. Ricard appears to have left no issue. There is no mention of children in the will, and he left the largest money bequests to his brother John and the latter's three sons. The Ricards appear to have been a family of local origin. On the evidence of the will John and his sons must have resided at Corby, near Stamford, and Thomas himself was almost certainly based at

[29] *Early Lincoln Wills, 1280–1547*, ed. A. Gibbons (Lincoln, 1888), 162–3. The identification is virtually confirmed by Bonney's note of *c*.1845 that the tomb commemorated one 'Richard . . . and his wife', Bonney simply transposing the surname and Christian name: *Bonney's Church Notes*, ed. N. S. Harding (Lincoln, 1937), 257. The reference in the will to a 'marble stone' shows that the phrase need not invariably denote the commissioning of a brass (although it usually does).

Grantham, two miles east of Harlaxton, where several of his executors resided. Ricard presumably ran a legal practice serving the needs of a busy market town, and established himself as a landowner on the proceeds. His monument is set in a recess at the east end of the north aisle, close to the site where his chantry was established.

At least one other sculpted effigy commemorating an apprentice can be identified. This is the fine Bath stone figure of *c*.1480 at Norton St Philip (Som.). Again the distinguishing feature of the effigy is the tall hat indicating the professional status of the commemorated. The effigy is set on a panelled chest in a canopied recess on the south side of the nave. Unfortunately the epitaph does not survive and the identity of the commemorated is unknown.

In the Midlands there are a number of alabaster incised slabs to apprentices. The earliest is a fine slab to Peter de la Pole (d. 1432) and his wife at Radbourne (Derby.) which reproduces in two-dimensional form the familiar dress type shown by the relief effigies at Aston on Trent and Harlaxton (Fig. 68). At Newbold on Avon (War.) a slab, now slightly worn, to Geoffrey Allesley (d. 1441) and his wife reproduces the same pattern.[30] In each case the male figure is shown attired in a long belted robe and the familiar tall hat. A third alabaster incised slab, at Denton (Lincs.), once represented the subject, Richard Denton (d. 1431), a JP, in the same attire, but the figure is now almost effaced.[31] One last slab presents a sharply different image. This is the partly recut memorial at Grove (Notts.) to Hugh Hercy (d. 1455) and his wife. Hercy, unlike the others, is shown in armour.[32] Although an apprentice, and thus shown with the distinctive hat, he was a member of a well-established gentry lineage. On his figure, therefore, the claims of professional attire had to be balanced against the customary requirement of a gentleman of the second estate to be shown in armour.

The evidence of this group of effigies leaves little doubt that by the fifteenth century the apprentices had emerged as a professional group in their own right. They were clearly identified by the wearing of a particular item of clothing—the tall hat. For the apprentices, the hat was as important a mark of status as the coif was for the judges and serjeants. Just when the distinctive headgear was adopted as a badge of identity is not clear. On the evidence of the effigies it could hardly have been later than the beginning of the fifteenth century. There is some evidence that in the late fourteenth century the coif had occasionally been worn by non-professional legal practitioners—men of the kind who in the next century would be called apprentices. One such person—the Lancastrian estate official John

[30] P. B. Chatwin, 'Monumental Effigies in the County of Warwick', *Trans. Birmingham Arch. Soc.* 49 (1923), 40–1 and pl. xv. Allesley was steward of the east Warwickshire properties of the Staffords of Grafton: C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401–1499* (Cambridge, 1992), 302–3.

[31] F. A. Greenhill, *Monumental Incised Slabs in the County of Lincoln* (Newport Pagnell, 1986), 40.

[32] Greenhill, *Incised Effigial Slabs*, ii. 8. The Hercys were a family of distinguished ancestry who had supported knighthood in the 14th cent. but who were more generally represented in the 15th by esquires.

Figure 68. Radbourne (Derby.): Peter de la Pole (d. 1432) and his wife. Rubbing of incised slab

Cokayne (d. 1372)—is shown wearing this headpiece on his effigy at Ashbourne (Derbys.) (Fig. 55).[33] It is possible that the distinctive puffed hat was adopted as a substitute for the coif once use of the latter came to be associated exclusively with the judges and serjeants. It is interesting that a hat of very similar appearance to the apprentices' is shown on the second of the two effigies at Pembridge—the effigy attributable to John Gour, *c.*1380 (Fig. 56). John, the son of the serjeant Nicholas Gour, was a non-professional legal practitioner of a type not unlike the later apprentices.[34] In the headgear on his effigy we may be witnessing the earliest emergence of the apprentice's tall hat. Just as the mid-fourteenth century was a defining period in the emergence of judicial attire, so the years shortly after may have been of comparable importance for the attire of the apprentices.

THE MONUMENTS OF ATTORNEYS

Below the apprentices was a larger and more diverse body of lawyers whose membership lacked clear definition. This was the group of attorneys, or country solicitors: men of wide though unspecialized legal expertise, whose work involved acting for landed proprietors and representing them in the central and local courts. Many of these men were fairly shadowy figures. In any county two or three attorneys are likely to have creamed off the best of the business, acting as retained counsel of the greater landowners and serving them in a variety of roles. It is hard to say what proportion of attorneys had attended an inn of court or chancery, but it was not perhaps a high one. The most common way in which an aspirant attorney could gain experience was probably through service as clerk to an established attorney or apprentice. Once qualified, the attorney could establish himself in a local town, acting for clients in the Westminster courts as and when needed. Among the local offices he might hold were those of under-sheriff, JP, coroner, and escheator.

In the fourteenth century local lawyers and attorneys were invariably shown on their memorials as civilians. William Wakebridge, for example, a long-serving JP and a man often employed as an attorney, was shown in civilian attire on his tomb at Crich (Derby.), *c.*1355 (Fig. 57). William de Cheltenham, a contemporary of his, a JP in Gloucestershire and long-serving steward of the Berkeley family, was shown in like attire on his tomb (*c.*1360) at Pucklechurch (Glos.) (Fig. 54).[35] In the early fifteenth century another local lawyer, John Catesby (d. *c.*1405), was similarly shown in civilian dress on his brass at Ashby St Ledgers (Northants).[36] None of these practitioners was shown wearing any special item of clothing indicative of the status of a lawyer. The only suggestion that professional dress may have been

[33] See above, 241–2. [34] For his career, see above, 243–4.

[35] For these two men, see above, 240–1, 244–5.

[36] S. Badham and N. E. Saul, 'The Catesbys' Taste in Brasses', in J. Bertram (ed.), *The Catesby Family and their Brasses at Ashby St Ledgers* (London, 2006), 37–43.

worn at this level is found in the coif on the effigy of John Cokayne (d. 1372) at Ashbourne (Derby.) (Fig. 55). It is possible that the mantle over Cokayne's shoulder may also have been a mark of official standing, although this is by no means certain.[37] As we have seen, the coif was discarded by local practitioners once it became an exclusive badge of identity of the judges and serjeants.

In the fifteenth century the lack of distinctiveness in the local lawyers' representation remained no less evident. There is nothing to suggest that any attribute on the lines of the apprentices' cap was adopted to indicate professional standing. If local attorneys chose to identify themselves professionally on their monuments, it was only by declaring so on their epitaphs. At Conisbrough (Yorks.) Ralph Reresby (d. 1466) described himself as 'iuris peritus' on an inscription recorded by Dodsworth, while at Thornton (Bucks.) Robert Ingleton (d. 1473) was described as 'iuris peritus' on an inscription still extant.[38] By no means every attorney chose to identify himself in his professional capacity: the Leicestershire attorney Robert Staunton was content to style himself simply 'armiger' on his brass of *c*.1458 at Castle Donington (Leics.).[39] Much greater attention was given to recording membership of an inn of court, presumably because it conferred more status. The epitaphs of William Crofton, John Warnett, John Pynnok, and John Wygmore all referred to membership of an inn.[40] For the most part, it was their social rather than their professional identity to which attorneys were concerned to draw attention.

In one respect, however, the representation of attorneys became more varied in the fifteenth century. In the previous century, as we have seen, attorneys had almost always chosen to be represented in civilian dress. After 1400, however, some at least were shown in armour. It is fair to say that most still chose to be shown as civilians. At Pulborough (Sussex) Edmund Mill (d. 1452), a lawyer and JP, was commemorated by a brass showing him as a civilian with his wife.[41] Twenty years earlier at Kingston on Thames the wealthy lawyer Robert Skerne (d. 1437) had likewise been shown as a civilian.[42] Both of these practitioners were armigerous.[43] Some of the larger civilian memorials were compositions of considerable splendour. At Furneux

[37] John Gour at Pembridge (Heref.) is likewise shown wearing a mantle (Fig. 56).

[38] *Dodsworth's Church Notes, 1619–1631*, ed. J. W. Clay (Yorkshire Arch. Soc. Record Series, 34, 1904), 138.

[39] This was a brass which he commissioned himself, on the death of his wife: he was not to die until *c*.1482. He was one of William, Lord Hastings's officials. For his career, see E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c.1422–c.1485* (Cambridge, 1992), 252.

[40] For these, see respectively, Griffin and Stephenson, *Monumental Brasses in Kent*, 179; BL, Add MS 5697, fo. 173^{r}; Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Top. gen. e85; Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments*, ii. iii. 323.

[41] For Mill's career, see Wedgwood, *History of Parliament, 1439–1509*, ii. 593–4. His will reveals him to have been a member of Gray's Inn: London, Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Kemp, fo. 306^{v}.

[42] For his career, see *History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, ed. Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe iv. 382–3.

[43] They both display their arms on their brasses. For the grant by Garter King of Arms to Mill, see A. R. Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1939), 77–8, 126.

Pelham (Herts.) Robert Newport (d. 1417) was commemorated by an elaborate canopied brass on a table tomb with shields of arms at the corners.[44] Representation in civilian attire could sit perfectly easily with displays of the trappings of status.

The most ambitious memorials of men of law, however, were those on which the commemorated was shown in armour. Armour was the attire traditionally associated with knighthood. Yet an oddity of these memorials is that very few of those commemorated had been dubbed knights. Sir Thomas Skelton (d. 1416), a lawyer and MP commemorated by an armoured brass with his wives at Hinxton (Cambs.), constitutes one of the few exceptions.[45] Most of his contemporaries who acted as attorneys remained esquires. The brothers William and John Wilcotes, lawyers in Oxfordshire, and commemorated by armoured effigies at Northleigh and Great Tew respectively (Fig. 69), never rose above the rank of esquire.[46] Nor did Thomas de Crewe (d. 1418), attorney and steward to the earl of Warwick and sometime MP for Warwickshire, shown in armour at Wixford (War.).[47] All three of these men almost certainly possessed the income to support the rank of knight: they had married heiresses; yet they chose to remain at the lower degree. The same was true of William Finderne (d. 1445), a lawyer of Derbyshire extraction who had migrated to the Thames valley after winning the hand of the Chelrey co-heiress, and was shown in an heraldic tabard at Childrey (Fig. 15).[48] Many other examples can be cited. In 1458 the Leicestershire lawyer and esquire Robert Staunton was shown in armour on his brass at Castle Donington (Leics.). In 1473 the esquire Robert Ingleton, a former common serjeant of London, was shown in armour on one of the most magnificent brasses of the fifteenth century at Thornton (Bucks.).[49]

In the case of each one of these tomb monuments choices were made by the commemorated or their agents about attire. Below the rank of apprentice, members of the legal profession were not distinguished by the wearing of any particular habit. Patrons were free to choose how they wished to be represented. How, then, did they arrive at a decision?

The considerations involved on each side were finely balanced. There was much to be said for representation in armour, the outward and visible sign of gentility. An expertise in law was widely recognized as bringing social distinction to those who possessed it. Legal work was respectable: it opened a pathway to 'honourable service'. Membership of one of the inns of court was a prize much sought after: it provided a training in many of the social arts considered appropriate for an aspirant nobleman. The question of whether or not an apprentice or attorney

[44] Norris (ed.), *Monumental Brasses: The Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society*, no. 134; *History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, iii. 831–2.

[45] Skelton had a busy practice as an attorney in the central courts and served from 1393 as chief steward of the southern and Welsh parts of the duchy of Lancaster. He was three times an MP: *History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, iv. 380–2.

[46] For their careers, see ibid. iv. 860–6.

[47] The choice of attire was the patron's own: he commissioned the brass in 1411 on the death of his wife. For a full account of his life, see *History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, ii. 691–3.

[48] Ibid. iii. 152–4.

[49] Norris (ed.), *Monumental Brasses: The Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society*, no. 199.

was a gentleman was not, therefore, an issue: a lawyer was definitely one of the gentleblooded. What was not so clear was whether such a man was entitled, in the eyes of his peers, to be shown on his tomb in armour. The difficulty was that the style of gentility associated with legal work was gentility of service, which generally translated in funerary etiquette into representation in a furred robe: civilian dress. For a man to be shown in armour some extra quality was needed: possession of lordship and the superior status which went with it.[50] Attorneys shown in armour were generally therefore those who, by one means or another, had established themselves as proprietors of manors. They were lordly folk. Robert Ingleton had acquired proprietorship of the manor of Thornton through the no doubt ample profits of his work;[51] William Finderne and the two Wilcotes brothers had acquired their estates through marriage to heiresses. By the conventions which governed funerary representation they were entitled to be shown on their tombs as landed gentry. Armour by the fifteenth century was seen as the outward and visible sign of good blood, whether those in whose veins it ran were knights or esquires.

THE MONUMENTS OF NOTARIES

The office of notary, which originated in the Ancient World, was concerned with the drawing up and registration of important public documents. It was an office of lesser importance in England than elsewhere in Europe because the widespread early use of sealed charters as substantive instruments made it in part unnecessary. From the late thirteenth century, however, notaries public were widely used in ecclesiastical administration to maintain personal and episcopal registers. A little later, notaries were also used by the Crown to draw up important diplomatic documents. By the fourteenth century the work of the notaries overlapped with that of the scriveners, and many notaries were members of the Scriveners Company. A rough division of labour between the two groups gave ecclesiastical and civil work to the notaries and more general work to the scriveners.

Notaries were usually shown on their monuments with the attributes of their employment, the pen case and inkhorn suspended from the belt. Like the apprentices, they were clothed in a distinctive attire, consisting in their case of a cap on the left shoulder and a scarf hanging in front. The best extant example of a notary's monument is the well-preserved effigy at St John's, Glastonbury, *c.*1470. The commemorated is shown wearing a mantle open at the sides, with a full-length tunic beneath and the distinctive hat by the left shoulder. The effigy is of alabaster and is set on a chest of Bath stone. The identity of the commemorated is not known, but he may have been of the Camel family on the evidence of the camel as a rebus on the chest. It is possible that he had connections through his notarial employment with Glastonbury Abbey.[52]

[50] See above, 232. [51] *VCH Buckinghamshire*, iv (London, 1927), 245.

[52] A. C. Fryer, 'Monumental Effigies in Somerset. Part VIII', *Proc. of the Somerset Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc.* 68 (1922), 49–50.

At St Mary Tower, Ipswich, are two brasses attributed to notaries, of *c*.1470 and 1506. In each case the commemorated is represented in simpler dress than the Glastonbury figure. No mantle is shown, and the dress is the ordinary attire of the civilian with the addition of the pen and inkhorn and, in the case of the earlier figure, the hat and scarf. It is not altogether clear whether the mantle was yet a recognized part of the notary's attire in this period. It is not featured on the one other extant brass of a notary, that of an unknown man at Great Chart (Kent), *c*.1470. As the ranks of the notaries gradually merged with those of the scriveners, so the dress of the notaries may have lost its distinctiveness, increasingly resembling that of the ordinary robed professional.

THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND COMMEMORATION

The tombs and brasses of the lawyers form a highly distinctive group among the monuments of the late medieval laity. They gave clear visual expression to the importance and social prominence of the lawyers in society. Of all the professions—the notaries, physicians, and others—it was the lawyers who grew fattest on the profits and social connections brought by their work. It is not surprising that the poet Gower considered them to constitute a fourth estate in the ranks of society.[53]

A key issue raised by the group of monuments is the image which the lawyers sought to project of themselves. Did they wish to be seen chiefly as professionals, the members of an elite vocation? Or did they seek after the image of the gentry, the knights and esquires? It is not easy to give a clear or straightforward answer to this question. Modes of representation varied from one branch of the profession to another. Where a distinctive professional attire was worn, from the mid-fourteenth century it was generally represented on monuments. The judges and serjeants were both shown with the coif, the mark of their order, and the apprentices with the puffed hat, the symbol of their own estate. Among both groups, however, there were still some who hankered after the trappings of gentry attire. Yelverton among the judges and Huddersfield among the serjeants were both shown on their brasses in armour.

Below the ranks of the judges and pleaders, the lawyers lacked a clear professional identity on their effigies. With the exception of the apprentices, the lesser lawyers were distinguished by no readily identifiable mode of attire. In a society in which legal knowledge was widely diffused, the ranks of the professional lawyers merged imperceptibly into those of the non-professional. Away from London, it was often difficult to tell just who the professional lawyers were. The dominant values of the upper classes being knightly and chivalric, the semi-professionals took on a gentry identity. Such men established themselves as country landowners, set up polite residence in fortified manor houses, and dignified themselves with grants

[53] Rigby, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages*, 182.

of arms.[54] To the mid-fourteenth century a few even combined legal work with service in the king's armies. In 1339 Chief Justice Sir Geoffrey Scrope served as a banneret in Edward III's forces in the Low Countries.[55] As late as 1408 a group of pleaders testifying for Lord Grey in his dispute with Sir Edward Hastings in the Court of Chivalry claimed to be 'gentlemen of ancestry and coat armour'.[56]

If by one process the lesser lawyers were gradually absorbed into the gentry, by another they gained a sharper identity as members of an honourable profession. By the fifteenth century it was generally accepted that legal work conferred a form of gentility, gentility of service. Engaging in legal practice was held to bestow honour and distinction on those engaged in it. Lawyers boasted of their professional employment on their tomb epitaphs. On his epitaph at Kingston on Thames Robert Skerne (d. 1437) maintained that 'making a living from the king's law brought honour'. Through practice in the law a pleader or attorney could win respectability and social recognition. The memorials of the lawyers attest the importance to them of peer recognition by the gentry and aristocracy. This is most immediately apparent in the pride which they took in the trappings of rank—coats of arms, crests, and even on occasion armoured effigies. Yet at the same time they found contentment in the honour brought by their work and calling. They recorded the details of office and occupation on their epitaphs. It is in the careful balancing of the twin identities of gentility and profession that the chief interest of the monuments of the late medieval lawyers is to be found.

[54] A. Musson, 'Legal Culture: Medieval Lawyers' Aspirations and Pretensions', in W. M. Ormrod (ed.), *Fourteenth Century England*, III (Woodbridge, 2004), 16–30.

[55] M. H. Keen, *Origins of the English Gentleman* (Stroud, 2002), 132. As late as 1423 Chief Justice Sir William Hankford was to bequeath a suit of armour among the chattels in his will: *Chichele's Register*, 293.

[56] M. Keen, 'English Military Experience and the Court of Chivalry: The Case of Grey v. Hastings', in idem, *Nobles, Knights and Men-at-Arms in the Middle Ages* (London, 1996), 183.

12

The Monuments of Women

WOMEN AS PATRONS

The figures of women appear on monuments a generation or two later than those of their menfolk. The earliest extant English effigies depicting women date from the second quarter of the thirteenth century. Well-produced examples are to be seen at Worcester Cathedral and Monkton Farleigh (Wilts.). These early effigies typically show the women alone, simply attired and with the head reclining on a cushion. From the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries women begin to be represented either alongside or close to their husbands. Some of the grandest of all medieval monuments commemorate widows of high aristocratic birth. Well-born widows supported by jointures in estates were often wealthy and had the means to indulge a taste for commemorative splendour.

From an historical standpoint, the effigies of women raise a number of questions. How important were women as patrons of monuments? To what extent did women's funerary taste differ from that of men? How far, if at all, may a distinct female identity be discerned in women's monuments?

It is by no means easy to answer these questions satisfactorily. Part of the problem lies in the difficulty encountered in identifying monuments which were actually commissioned by women. In many cases, monuments to women were commissioned after their deaths by agents acting on their behalf—executors, widower husbands, sons or daughters. The fine canopied brass to the memory of Margaret, Lady Cobham (d. 1395) at Cobham, for example, was commissioned on her death by her husband, John, Lord Cobham, who had already commissioned other brasses in the church. At Rippingale (Lincs.) the canopied wall monument (*c*.1340) of another aristocratic lady, Margaret, first wife of Sir Roger de Colville, was commissioned by her son, Sir Richard de Gobaud: an inscription on the wall once recorded the fact. Even when the effigy was accompanied by an attribute which carried female associations, such as a domestic pet, there is no assurance of female patronage. The monument could have been commissioned by a husband seeking to invest it with some personal characteristics.

If a good many female effigies were commissioned by men, equally there were monuments to men which were commissioned by their womenfolk. It is very likely that Joan, Lady Cobham (d. 1369), was responsible for the two monuments at Lingfield and Berkeley to Reginald, Lord Cobham, her husband, and Thomas, Lord Berkeley, her brother, who died within a month of each other. The monuments are

so similar that they are almost certain to be the products of a single commission; yet neither exhibits any characteristics indicative of female patronage. Equally, there is a fair likelihood that Marie de St Pol, widow of Aymer de Valence, had a hand in her husband's monument in Westminster Abbey. The heraldry and the inclusion of novel French motifs both point to Marie's involvement, even if stylistically the monument owes more to the influence of the Westminster-based masons.[1]

From the early fourteenth century married women were often shown on monuments alongside their husbands as couples. Among the earliest examples of such representation are the brass of Sir John de Creke and his wife (Fig. 26) and the incised slab of Adam de Franton and his wife at Wyberton (Lincs.), both dating from the second quarter of the century. The spur to representation of husbands and wives together was almost certainly the establishment of chantries. With the shift from collective to individual intercession, the naming of particular beneficiaries became common, and when both husband and wife were so named it made sense for them both to be represented. Generally, double monuments were commissioned by the surviving spouse. When that survivor was the widow, the opportunity was again afforded for female patronage. At Lowick (Northants), for example, Katherine, Ralph Green's widow, was responsible for commissioning the alabaster monument to them both in association with her fellow executors (Fig. 11); the contract which she made with the alabasterers survives.[2] Occasionally, we can catch a glimpse of husband and wife acting together in a commission. At Northleigh (Oxon.) there can be little doubt that William and Elizabeth Wilcotes planned their monument as a joint commission (*c*.1410) as Elizabeth, who was to survive her husband by 34 years, is shown fashionably dressed and not as a widow; Elizabeth was to arrange her own, more personal, tribute to her husband over twenty years later when she commissioned the fan-vaulted chantry, enclosing the tomb (Fig. 69). At Chipping Campden (Glos.) the brass of the wool merchant William Grevel and his first wife Marion exhibits features which suggest that it too was jointly planned (Fig. 58). The most obvious pointer is that the marginal epitaph is constructed not as a single text honouring both commemorated, but as two separate texts, one for each person and each flanking the person to whom it relates. It is interesting that the equality of the two figures is reinforced by the canopy shaft between them, which conveys the impression of two separate brasses merged into one. The design of the brass may have been agreed before Marion's death in 1386.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMALE IDENTITY

The difficulty of identifying who commissioned a monument greatly complicates an understanding of female self-representation in the funerary art of the period.

[1] L. L. Gee, *Women, Art and Patronage from Henry III to Edward III: 1216–1377* (Woodbridge, 2002), 113–15.

[2] Crossley, *English Church Monuments*, 30.

Figure 69. Northleigh (Oxon.): William Wilcotes and his wife, *c.*1410

When we look at the monument of a woman, we rarely know whether the woman commemorated had a hand in its design. Nor, in those cases where it seems she did not, can we usually tell whether she might have exercised indirect influence through an agent. Because of these difficulties it is hard to determine whether we are looking at women on their monuments through their own eyes or through the eyes of others. Surprisingly, however, whichever may have been the case, the construction of female identity was, in the end, much the same. On the great majority of monuments on which women are depicted, it is the male identity which asserts itself. It is true that many monuments on which women are represented commemorate married couples. Even on those where the woman is shown alone, however, she is depicted as the bearer of a patrilineal discourse; she is invested with, and communicates, male values.

Some of the clearest evidence for the construction of female identity is found on inscriptions. In the textual discourse which decorated tombs we can see how women described themselves: or, perhaps more commonly, were described by others. On the monuments which commemorate married couples the position is very clear: the womenfolk were presented as appendages of their husbands. In most cases, they were identified by Christian name only, for example '. . . Anne, the wife of . . .'; the wife's natal family was rarely given. This form of identification reflected the practice in legal documents of the time. In marriage a woman lost her independent personality at law. Her own identity was subsumed into that of her husband. Even where a woman was more than once married, she was identified solely in relation to her husbands. Thus at Warkworth (Northants) the Lady Amabilla (birth name not given) was described as (in translation) 'lately the wife of Sir Thomas Strange knight and earlier the wife of Sir John Chetwode knight'. At Chipping Norton (Oxon.) a burgess lady was identified in the same way (in translation): 'Agnes Tanner once the wife of William Tanner and before that of Nicholas Dyar of Abingdon'.

In just one circumstance was the wife's family identified by name. This was when the wife was of superior birth to her husband and thus the bringer of additional lustre to his lineage. From the late fourteenth century, when inscriptions began to grow in length, it was by no means uncommon for the natal family to be identified where this was the case. The earliest recorded example seems to have been on the brass, now lost, of Sir Miles Stapleton and his wife, 1364, at Ingham (Norfolk), where Lady Stapleton was described as 'filie de monsieur de Ingham'. The inclusion of this information was warranted by Lady Stapleton's position as heiress of Oliver, Lord Ingham, and thus transmitter of his inheritance to her husband. By the fifteenth century the appropriation of the wife's identity by the husband became a fairly familiar device by which lower-born gentry added to their status on memorials. At Addington (Kent) Alice, wife of Robert Watton (d. 1470), was identified as the daughter of John Clerk, an exchequer baron, a lady of superior background to her relatively undistinguished husband. At Thame (Oxon.), on a brass commissioned by his son Richard (d. 1477), Thomas Quartermain was linked through his wife with the Bretons and the Greys of Rotherfield, both families of superior status to his own.[3] A host of similar examples could be cited. In a lineage-conscious society women were valued as the representatives of a good blood line.

On a minority of monuments an attempt was made to honour both partners equally. A good example is provided by the brass of Sir Simon Felbrigg and his wife, daughter of the duke of Teschen, at Felbrigg (Norfolk). On this highly decorative memorial, commissioned by Sir Simon on his wife's death in 1416, reference is made equally to both persons commemorated. On the foot inscription Sir Simon is described as standard bearer to King Richard II, while his wife is honoured for her birth and her service to Richard's queen, Anne of Bohemia. In

[3] The inscription is now lost, but is published in F. G. Lee, *History and Antiquities of the Church of Thame* (London, 1883), p. 91, from BL, MS Cleopatra C iii, fo. 3^{v}.

the heraldry likewise the honours are equally divided, with the German eagle, for Anne, being shown alongside the English royal arms. The impression is given of a memorial in which justice is done to the male and female identities in equal measure.

The brass of the Felbriggs, however, is a memorial unusually sensitive in its delineation of space and identity. In most cases, the wife is relegated to a position of subordination to her husband. The depths were plumbed on an inscription at High Easter (Essex) to Agnes, the wife of Sir Geoffrey Gate (d. 1487), Agnes's commemoration being treated as a mere coat-peg on which to hang an account of her husband's career:

> Here lieth Dame Agnes Gate the wif of Syr Geffrey Gate Knyght the which Syr Geffrey was vi yere Capteyn of the Ile of Wight and after that marchall of Caleis there kepte with ye Pykard worshipful warris and ther intended as a good knight to please the king in the parties of Normandi with all his myght ye which Agnes died ye ix day of December ye yere of oure Lord M CCCC LXXXVII.

The assumptions of male superiority which led to the wife's identity being subsumed in her husband's were no less evident in the heraldry on monuments. On the grander memorials commissioned by husbands to their wives, on which heraldic displays were found, it was usually the arms of families related to the husband which dominated. On the brass of Margery, second wife of Lord Willoughby, at Spilsby (Lincs.), 1391, a monument notable for its profusion of heraldry, the coats of families to which Lord Willoughby was related greatly outnumbered those of families with which his wife had ties. On the inscription, moreover, Margery was identified solely as the wife of Lord Willoughby, her natal family of Zouche being ignored.

The precedence accorded to the arms of the husband's family drew on a long tradition in heraldry which privileged a wife's adopted family over her own. This convention had been employed since at least the thirteenth century on personal seals. On the seal of Agnes, second wife of William de Vesci, lord of Alnwick, *c*.1254, Agnes is shown displaying in her right hand a shield bearing the arms of Vesci and in her left, one bearing the arms of Ferrers, her natal family—the right (dexter) position being superior heraldically to the left (sinister). The arms of Vesci are also shown prominently on Agnes's mantle.[4]

Similar conventions for the display of heraldry were employed on the tomb effigies of ladies. Thus on the figure of Isabella Brus, first wife of Sir John Marmaduke, at Easington (Co. Durham) Isabella's husband's arms—the popinjays—are shown on her kirtle, symbolizing her reception into her husband's family.[5] The dominance of the identity of the husband's family also betrays itself in the design of monuments. At Lingfield (Surrey), for example, the Cobham family's identity triumphs in the design of the brass commemorating Eleanor, née Culpeper, first wife of Sir Reginald Cobham (1420). Rising from the canopy of this ornate memorial is

[4] P. Coss, *The Lady in Medieval England, 1000–1500* (Stroud, 1998), 43. [5] Ibid. 78–9.

a rectangular banner, the symbol of the Cobhams' banneret status, to which the family attached such importance in its years of relative decline.[6]

If on the great majority of monuments to married women the identity of the woman was absorbed in that of her husband, in the case of one female group this was not the case. This was the group comprising the heiresses, the prizes of the aristocratic marriage market. Heiresses were not only in many cases women of great wealth; they were also bearers of dynastic memory and preservers of a family's name and identity. They were possessed of a distinction lacking in other marriageable women. When they and their families bargained for marriage alliances, they could do so from a position of strength. Their dignity often showed in their memorials.

A notable feature of some heiresses' memorials was the importance attached to the deceased's natal family. As so often, the clearest evidence is provided by heraldry. In the extensive armorials on heiresses' tombs it is usually the arms of the natal family and their kin which dominate. On her brass at Mautby (Norfolk), for example, Margaret Paston (d. 1484), the heiress of the Mautbys, ensured that it was the memory of the Mautbys which lived on:

> I wull that myn executours purveye a stoon to be leyde upon my grave . . . and upon that stoon I wulle have iiii scochens sett at the iiii corners wherof I wulle that the first scochen shalbe of my husbondes armes and myn departed, the ii^de^ of Mawtebys armes and Berneys of Redham departed, the iii^de^ of Mawtebys armes and the Lord Loveyn departed, the iiii^te^ of Mawtebys armes and Sir Roger Beauchamp departed. And in myddys of the seid stoon I wull have a scochen sett of Mawtebys armes allone.[7]

Her late husband's Paston family identity was accorded hardly any attention on the memorial at all.

On a more modest scale the position was replicated on the brass to Anne (d. 1539), widow of Sir John Danvers, at Dauntsey (Wilts.). Anne, the daughter of Sir John Stradling, was the ultimate heiress of the Dauntsey family, once lords of the manor. On her brass on the back panel of her tomb she was shown flanked by just one shield of arms, bearing the arms of Dauntsey, no other arms being represented. A quarter of a century earlier, when her husband had died, she had commissioned a monument which commemorated them both on the opposite side of the chancel. On the shields at the four corners of this monument she had heraldry from both sides of the family represented. However, on the marginal epitaph it was again her privileged position as an heiress to which she drew attention. Her husband, a not insubstantial county knight, was dismissed as 'sumtyme lorde of this maner and patron of this churche in the ryght of Dame Anne his wyf'.[8]

[6] It bears the arms of Cobham impaling Culpeper.

[7] *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Davis, i, no. 230.

[8] Anne's own brass is the more distinctive of the two memorials she commissioned. It shows her kneeling, with a Trinity to her right, balancing the shield on the left. The Dauntsey arms are repeated on the stonework above. In her will Anne asked to be buried where God disposed; yet she indicated her preferences by establishing a twelve-year chantry in St Anne's chapel in Dauntsey church (TNA: PRO, PROB 11/28, fos. 7^r^–8^v^; extracts printed in F. N. Macnamara, *Memorials of the Danvers Family* (London, 1895), 274–8). The will reveals her as a lady of some piety, with an

One of the most striking memorials to a late medieval heiress is the brass of Joan, Lady Cobham (d. 1434) at Cobham (Kent) (Fig 24). Joan was the last of the long line of Cobhams of Cobham. The grandchild of the long-lived John 3rd Lord Cobham, she was adopted by her grandfather on the deaths of her parents, brought to live at Cobham, and invested with a Cobham identity. Although married no fewer than five times, she failed to produce a son who survived to adulthood. Her sole surviving child was another daughter, Joan, the offspring of her second marriage to Sir Reginald Braybrooke. This daughter, who took the Cobham estates in marriage to the Devon knight Sir Thomas Brooke, was the probable patron of her mother's brass. In its imagery the brass presents Joan very much as she saw herself—the last of her line, the bearer of the Cobham identity. She is styled 'Joan, Lady of Cobham', just as she styled herself on her seal. The rich heraldic display celebrates the Cobham lineage. Six shields are shown, three on each side, reading from the top on the dexter side: Cobham; Peverel quartering de la Pole impaling Cobham, for Joan's father and mother; Braybrooke impaling Cobham; and on the sinister side: Cobham impaling Courtenay for her grandparents; Cobham quartering de la Pole; and Brooke, for Joan's son-in-law, impaling Cobham. Joan is represented heraldically as the bearer of her family's ancestral history. Below her are two groups of children, which give the impression, entirely wrongly, that the Cobham line was carried on into the future. The reality was that the Cobhams had died out, their place being taken by the Brookes. The function of the brass was to ensure the survival of the Cobham identity within the identity of the new Brooke lordship.

If heiresses could assert a family identity on their memorials, so too could widows—and widows who were heiresses most of all. In widowhood, women recovered their independent personalities at law. At the same time, according to common law, they were entitled to a third of their late husbands' property. A well-to-do aristocratic widow, however, might find herself in possession of very much more than this. Commonly in the late Middle Ages, when marrying, a bride was given a jointure in part of her husband's lands—that is to say, joint tenancy while she and her husband lived, with sole tenancy on the death of one partner.[9] And, generally, the higher in status the bride, the larger the size of the jointure. On the death of her husband a well-born, and well-provided-for, dowager could enjoy possession of very substantial property for the rest of her life—to the disgruntlement of the heir who might find himself virtually excluded.

The influence which aristocratic widows could exercise as patrons is well illustrated by the magnificent tombs to the Despenser family and their kin at Tewkesbury. Some half a dozen monuments, dating mostly from the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, sweep in impressive array round the high altar of the abbey church. In most generations the Despenser women survived their husbands

interest in the Mass of the Five Wounds. The curious verses on her brass proclaiming the vanities of worldly wealth suggest an ascetic streak in her devotions. Sadly this exquisite brass was stolen from Dauntsey church in about 2001.

[9] K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), 64–7.

by some years, even in one case by some decades. It was the women accordingly who were most active as patrons of funerary sculpture.[10] The first in the series is the tomb of the younger Hugh Despenser (d. 1326), Edward II's favourite, for which his widow secured a prestigious position behind the high altar; unfortunately this tomb survives only in fragmentary condition. In the next generation Elizabeth, widow of the third Hugh Despenser (d. 1349), was responsible for commissioning the rich canopied monument to herself and her husband in the north-east corner of the presbytery, adopting a design which owed much to Edward II's tomb at Gloucester. In the late 1370s Elizabeth, widow of Edward, Lord Despenser, commissioned the most remarkable of the Tewkesbury monuments—the chantry chapel of the Holy Trinity, under the south arcade of the choir, from the roof of which the kneeling figure of her husband looks down on the main altar: a strikingly original composition which may have had its origins in the murals of the royal family in St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster. The last in the sequence of monuments was commissioned by the last of the Despenser line—Isabella, successively the wife of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Worcester, and Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. In 1423, over the burial place of her first husband to the north of the altar, she raised an elegant chantry chapel, in which she herself was to be interred sixteen years later. As heiress to the Despenser name and title, Isabella chose a resting place amidst her Despenser ancestors in preference to one in any of the mausolea associated with her husbands' families.

The patronage of widows can be detected in other late medieval monuments, particularly those on which the widows themselves are shown, either alone or with their husbands. A good example is provided by the elaborate monument of Joan, widow of Sir Richard de Cornwall, at Asthall (Oxon.), which Joan conceived in association with a chantry in Asthall church for the benefit of her and her husband's souls (*c*.1320).[11] She arranged for her tomb effigy, showing her as a widow, to be placed immediately below the north transept window, with the canopy gable framing its lower lights. In the stained glass of the window were her husband's arms and those of other members of the Cornwall family. Joan's responsibility for the commission was indicated by the presence of her donor figure (now lost) at the bottom of the central panel. Joan appears to have conceived the tomb, transept chapel, and glazing as parts of an integrated scheme of commemoration.

Perhaps the grandest commemorative scheme commissioned by an aristocratic widow, however, is found in the monument of Alice de la Pole, duchess of Suffolk,

[10] J. Luxford, *The Art and Architecture of the English Benedictine Monasteries, 1300–1540: A Patronage History* (Woodbridge, 2005), 173, 178–82.

[11] K. Mair, 'The Cornwall Chapel of St Nicholas Church, Asthall', *Oxoniensia*, 62 (1977), 241–67. The chronology of the Cornwall chapel presents problems. Although the chantry was established in *c*.1320, the glass in the north window appears to date from twenty years before that. The securing of the endowment for the chantry may have followed rather than preceded the building programme. P. A. Newton, *The County of Oxford: A Catalogue of Medieval Stained Glass* (London, 1979), 22–3, doubted the integration of the monument and the glazing scheme. Mair, however, shows that such integration was intended.

Figure 70. Ewelme (Oxon.): Alice, Duchess of Suffolk (d. 1475)

at Ewelme (Oxon.).[12] Alice was a patron of almost limitless means. At her death in 1475 she enjoyed an income of at least £1,300 per annum from estates in the south Midlands and East Anglia. Her ambition was on a scale to match her wealth. Born into the gentry, the daughter of Thomas Chaucer, the poet's son, she married into the titled aristocracy. Her last and her most powerful husband, whom she survived for twenty years, was William de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, Henry VI's minister. In 1437 she and de la Pole established a chantry complex at Ewelme, her birthplace, called God's House, comprising a school and a community of thirteen almsmen and two priests. The community were charged with praying in perpetuity for the good estate of the founders, while they lived, and for the safety of their souls after their deaths. Alice's tomb, placed on the north side of the chapel of St John, where the almsmen worshipped, functioned as the main focus of the intercessory attentions of the priests and the dependent community (Fig. 70). It exhibited a number of features which testified to Alice's personal involvement in

[12] J. A. A. Goodall, *God's House at Ewelme* (Aldershot, 2001), 175–97.

the commission. First, it displayed around the sides a remarkable armorial, which paralleled that on her parents' tomb immediately to the west. In both schemes the dominant message was the antiquity and connections of the Chaucers, Alice's own family. The Chaucers were a middling gentry line, burgess stock in origin, who had come a long way in three generations. The selection of arms drew attention to the grandeur of the families into which they had married—the Roets, Montagus, Burghershes, and, above all, the de la Poles: families of high rank or related to the royal house. Second, the highly architectural conception of the tomb was of singular distinction. It finds few direct parallels among monuments of the time. The upper section is of conventional form, consisting of a chest and effigy surrounded by a canopy of rectangular shape built through the wall to the chancel; there are parallels for this sort of design in the monument of Archbishop Chichele at Canterbury. More remarkable is the lower part of the structure which contains, hidden behind a grill, a second effigy of Alice as an emaciated cadaver, looking through half-open eyes at paintings of the Annunciation, St John the Baptist, and St Mary Magdalene on the roof above. This part of the tomb is particularly noteworthy for showing the cadaver locked in gaze at paintings which show devotional imagery and not, as more commonly, the Resurrection.

The distinctiveness of Alice's monument points strongly to her involvement as patron. Her tastes in piety found especial expression in the choice of subjects for the paintings. St John the Baptist was an obvious choice because he was the dedicatee of the chapel to the south of the tomb where the almsmen worshipped, while St Mary Magdalene presumably recommended herself as the patron of almshouses. The probable reason for choosing the Annunciation lay in the Incarnational iconography in St John's chapel, which centred on the cult of the Holy Name.

Overall, in the imagery of the monument—which Alice commissioned only a few years before her death in 1475—a careful balance was struck between grandeur and humility. Alice's taste for self-aggrandizement found expression in the boastful display of coats of arms on the shields. Yet the presence of the grisly cadaver indicated her acceptance of abasement for the salvation of her soul. For all her attempts to achieve balance, however, the general impression conveyed by the monument is one of grandeur. The cadaver effigy is placed low down, hidden from view; it was a private thing, self-referential. It is the upper effigy, the state effigy, which catches the eye. For Alice, the cadaver offered a formalized statement of humility. She had to hope that the grandeur of the rest of the monument would not stand in the way of her entry into the kingdom of heaven.

MODES OF REPRESENTATION

The effigies of females fall into two main groups—those representing the deceased as a widow, and those showing her in the fashionable attire of a married woman. A minority of figures show young unmarried women with loose flowing hair. In determining the mode of attire on female effigies convention played an important role as it did on the effigies of men.

The earliest female effigies show women fairly simply dressed. An effigy in Worcester Cathedral, *c.*1240, shows the commemorated wearing a long robe with no over-garment, a wimple covering her neck and chin. At Wickhampton (Norfolk), three-quarters of a century later, the wife of Sir John Gerberge is likewise shown in only basic garments: a close-fitting kirtle with sleeves and a sleeveless surcoat ('surcote') over, with a veil and wimple. The presence of the wimple may suggest that Lady Gerberge was represented as a widow. Such is the simplicity of these early female effigies, however, that the deceased's position in the life cycle is not always clear.

In the fourteenth century, as monuments grew in importance as marks of status, a greater interest was shown in the representation of costume.[13] When new fashions appeared, they were faithfully reproduced in updated versions of effigies. The styles of the second quarter of the fourteenth century are well represented on the brass of Lady Creke at Westley Waterless (Cambs.) (Fig. 26). Here the lady's figure is entirely enclosed in a tight-fitting kirtle with slits extending to the waist, over which a long mantle is draped, secured by cords below the shoulders. On monuments of the second half of the century the surcoat is commonly shown cut away at the sides to show the kirtle, as on brasses at Cobham. Sometimes, as on Lady Foxley's figure at Bray (Berks.), 1378, strips of cloth were shown hanging from the elbows in imitation of male costume. On the monuments of richer women the mantle was still commonly worn over the surcoat, as on Lady Cobham's brass at Lingfield, *c.*1380. A variety of decorative headdresses were represented on monuments of the well-born. A popular form in the 1380s was the nebulé, in which the face was framed by veils starched into wavy flounces, with smaller flounces lower down arranged on the shoulders. Another popular form was the so-called reticulated, which was similar in shape but decorated with jewelled network. In a third form, seen on Lady Harsick's brass at Southacre (Norfolk), 1384, the hair was exposed, plaited at the sides of the face and bound by a jewelled band (Fig. 71).

In the early fifteenth century the kirtle and sideless surcoat were still commonly represented on effigies. On monuments at Willoughby in the Wolds (Notts.) and Polesworth (War.) the surcoat was worn with the mantle. The most fashionable garment in the early fifteenth century, however, was a high- or fur-collared gown, belted well above the waist, known as the houpelande. On the grander sorts of monument this was sometimes shown with the mantle. Headdresses in the fifteenth century became steadily richer and more exotic. From *c.*1420 the horned headdress was widely represented. In this, the hair was gathered in cauls of a lofty, sweeping form, with a veil resting on the peaks and falling down behind. Later, the aptly named butterfly headdress swept to popularity. In this extravagant confection, the hair was gathered into two rectangular-shape cauls behind the head, which provided the base for a framework of wires forming the wings. To show off the shape, figures on brasses with this headdress were usually turned sideways, as at Isleham (Cambs.), 1484. After *c.*1480 the butterfly style gave way to the less

[13] For female costume see M. Scott, *Medieval Dress and Fashion* (London, 2007).

eye-catching kennel-like bonnet, familiar from portraits of Tudor ladies. Overall, however, ladies' dresses lost nothing of their richness. A feature often prominently displayed on Tudor monuments was the long girdle sometimes reaching to the ground, but in other cases ending in a pomander.

Exotic and expensive clothing—which on most sculpted monuments would have been picked out in colour—constituted a very obvious mark of status. The display of such attire contributed powerfully to the culture of exclusion by which the second estate maintained their ascendancy in society. Just as men were differentiated commemoratively by the manner of their attire, so too were women. Particular styles of clothing appear to have been associated with particular ranks. In his contract with Prentys and Sutton for a monument to the earl and countess of Salisbury Hertcombe asked, in the latter's case, for a 'counterfeit' of a countess, implying an image of a particular sort.[14] One particular clothing item seems to have been associated with high rank—the 'surcote ouverte', or sideless surcoat, which was used as a ceremonial dress well into the sixteenth century. In her own contract with Prentys and Sutton Katherine Green asked to be shown in a 'surcote ouverte' on what was obviously a high-status tomb. There are indications that a mantle attached by cords worn over the 'surcote' may also have been a signifier of status. It is most often depicted on monuments to women of the highest rank.

In general, what marked aristocratic women apart on monuments was the sheer richness of their clothing—in particular, the richness of their headdresses. It was for this reason that patrons were so keen to have fashion accurately represented—in the 'best and goodeliest wyse', as Richard Willoughby put it in regard to his wife's effigy in his contract with Reames.[15] The impression of richness could be strengthened by an appropriate display of jewellery on the effigy. At St George's Chapel, Windsor, Lady Roos was shown wearing elaborate necklaces, *c.*1530, while on a brass at Digswell (Herts.), 1415, Joan Peryent, a lady-in-waiting to Henry IV's queen, was shown displaying the swan jewel on her collar. At Elford (Staffs.) Sir William Smythe's second wife, niece of Warwick the Kingmaker, was shown with a glittering coronet, easily overshadowing his first wife. On some memorials the wearing of an heraldic mantle reinforced the message of the deceased's membership of the armigerous elite. At Long Melford (Suffolk) the Clopton ladies were shown in heraldic mantles not only on their brasses but in the stained glass windows which overlooked them (*c.*1460–1500). Among aristocratic women, only widows were represented on tombs in the very simplest clothes, typically a veil and unadorned mantle. Even on these effigies, however, status was usually indicated in some way. Alice, duchess of Suffolk, at Ewelme, for example, was shown with the Garter on

[14] Bayliss, 'An Indenture for Two Alabaster Effigies', *CM* 16 (2001), 23: 'un ymage contrefait a un comtesse'.

[15] But the details of female costume are not specified in the contract for the Willoughby tomb or in any other contract surviving. This suggests that there were drawings of figures in workshops which could be shown to clients for their approval. The small details of attire—jewellery and necklaces—could be settled by negotiation between the parties.

her left arm. Moralists of the time, particularly in the years after the Black Death, were much given to complaining of the vulgar ostentation of female clothing.[16] Whether or not, as they alleged, richly attired women were guilty of the sin of pride, on the monuments of women the display of rich attire served a clear purpose: it helped proclaim the ascendancy of the upper classes. In this respect, it served for women the same purpose as the wearing of armour did for men.

THE CLASPED HAND POSE

A notable feature of some late medieval monuments is the use of the clasped hand pose. Husbands and wives, instead of being represented at prayer, were shown holding each other's hand. There has been much debate about the significance of this pose. Does it indicate that the couple felt particular affection for each other? Or is it merely an expression of a passing artistic convention? It is worth exploring the significance of the pose in the context of what is known of contemporary husband-and-wife relations.

Monuments showing husbands and wives clasping hands enjoyed their greatest popularity in the half-century or so from the late 1360s. Only one example is known from before this period, the remarkable semi-relief slab of a civilian and wife at Winterbourne Bassett (Wilts.), *c*.1290–1300. A cluster of examples come from just after the end of the period, notably the alabaster effigies at Warrington (Cheshire), 1462, an incised slab at Barlow (Derby.), 1467, and brasses at Stockerston (Leics.), 1467, Nether Heyford (Northants), 1487, and Thornton (Bucks.), 1494.[17] Much the greatest concentration, however, is found in the decades immediately before and after 1400. The series begins with a group of monuments of the 1360s and 1370s—the brasses of Sir Miles and Lady Stapleton, 1364, at Ingham (Norfolk), the alabaster monument of the earl and countess of Warwick, 1369, at Warwick, and the freestone monuments of John of Gaunt and his first wife in St Paul's Cathedral and the earl and countess of Arundel, *c*.1376, in Chichester Cathedral.[18] These are then followed by a group of brasses dating from 1380 or shortly after, at Chrishall (Essex), Southacre (Norfolk) (Fig. 71), and Berkhamsted (Herts.). In the 1390s there are numerous further examples, among them the brasses of Sir Edward and Lady Cerne at Draycot Cerne (Wilts.), the alabaster monument of Sir Thomas

[16] S. M. Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince: A Study of the Years 1340–1365* (Woodbridge, 1980), 6–13.

[17] For Nether Heyford, see below, 303. The Thornton brass is now lost but known from an antiquarian drawing: Lack, Stuchfield, Whittemore, *Monumental Brasses of Buckinghamshire* (London, 1994), 213. Also note a brass at Brown Candover (Hants), *c*.1490, showing an unknown civilian and his wife arm in arm.

[18] For the brass at Ingham, now lost, see S. Badham, '"Beautiful Remains of Antiquity": The Medieval Monuments in the former Trinitarian Priory Church at Ingham, Norfolk, Part I: The Lost Brasses', *CM* 21 (2006), 14. For John of Gaunt's monument, likewise now lost, see Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages*, 140. The monument to the earl and countess of Arundel was moved to Chichester from Lewes Priory, probably at the time of the Reformation.

and Lady Arderne at Elford (Staffs.), and the gilt metal effigies of Richard II and his queen in Westminster Abbey (Fig. 18).[19] In the early fifteenth century the fashion reached its peak of popularity. Good examples of the pose are found on brasses at Dartmouth (Devon) and Little Shelford (Cambs.) and on monuments with relief effigies at Strelley (Notts.) and Lowick (Northants) (Fig. 11). After about 1417, and more particularly from 1430, examples become fewer. Two brasses exhibit the pose—those at Trotton (Sussex) and Herne (Kent). There is also one substantial relief monument, the tomb of the duke and duchess of Somerset at Wimborne Minster, 1444. By the second quarter of the century, however, enthusiasm for the pose was dying away, and after about 1460 it was only infrequently employed.

As a mannerism fashionable on tombs the hand-holding pose enjoyed a relatively brief lifespan. Its heyday coincided with the flowering of 'International' court art and the spread of the architectural style of Henry Yevele. In strictly artistic terms, it is tempting to see it as a response to the growing formality of the effigial art of the day. The highly animated postures popular in the 1340s died away soon after the Black Death, while the gently swaying pose employed on some brasses around 1380 was gone by five years later. Hand-holding may have recommended itself as the essential counterpoint to contemporary stylistic severity—the means by which tomb makers could bring a degree of informality to an otherwise rather lifeless art.

An explanation presented in strictly formal terms, however, while helpful in explaining the appearance of the pose at a specific time, is not by itself sufficient. In particular, it fails to offer an explanation for the relative rarity of the pose even in its heyday: between 1390 and 1410 it was never employed on more than a minority of monuments. In consequence, a different explanation has been offered by Peter Coss.[20] In Coss's view, the pose may be taken to signify the deeply affective relationship which joined the married couples depicted in this manner. As other scholars have noted, the period of its popularity coincided with the writing of some unusually expressive verse. Chaucer, Clanvow, and other courtly poets were giving new and highly explicit voice to their inner feelings in verse written in the 1380s and 1390s. It may be the case, as Coss has argued, that the urge to self-expression which moved the poets moved some of the commemorated to seek similar self-expression on their tombs and brasses. This is a line of argument which has much to commend it: not only does it help to explain why the pose rose to popularity when it did: it also accounts for the relative selectivity with which it was used. However, a number of points can be made on the other side. There is evidence that marriage in upper-class households in the Middle Ages was in many cases loveless, or near-loveless. Matches were often contracted for reasons of personal or family advantage—for example, to forge an alliance or to acquire landed wealth. Spouses' first marriages were usually arranged by their parents. Joan Cobham was betrothed to John de la Pole when she was 7, and her father John, the 3rd Lord, to his wife when he had been around 12. Relations between husbands and wives could often be cool and distant. It was not uncommon for husbands to

[19] The arms of Richard and his queen are now broken off. Note also the indent of a lost hand-holding brass at St Edmund's, Salisbury. [20] Coss, *Lady in Medieval England*, 93–105.

take mistresses, and their wives paramours. Against this unpromising background, the notion that love in marriage could be celebrated on a monument might appear improbable.

However, the picture of marriage as an essentially loveless institution needs to be qualified somewhat. By the middle of the twelfth century it was the view of the theologians that love must lie at the very heart of marriage. Human and divine love were considered conceptually inseparable: St Bernard said that they formed part of the same ladder. Popes cited biblical authority in support of the view that husbands and wives should become one flesh in marriage, on the model of Christ's relationship with his Church. A host of preachers urged the importance of love in their sermons. Guibertus de Tornaco was particularly emphatic: husbands should love their wives, he said; the love which unites a husband and wife should be founded on partnership because the two are equal and partners. Guibertus, like most preachers, recognized that in practice marriages might be arranged by parents. But in that case, he argued, husbands and wives should grow together in marriage; by living an indivisible life they should develop a feeling of love which made mutual separation unthinkable. In other words, affective love should flourish within the marital bond in those cases where it did not precede it.

In the light of this teaching, the notion that marital love could be celebrated on a memorial might appear less fanciful. Historians, indeed, are now generally agreed that not all upper-class marriages were loveless. Richard II's marriage to Anne of Bohemia affords a case in point. This was an alliance born of political convenience, contracted to nurture Anglo-Imperial relations, yet it developed into one of the most companionate of all English royal marriages. In the same period, John of Gaunt's marriage to his first wife Blanche is likewise known to have been an extremely loving one. It is natural, in the light of such evidence, to wonder if hand-holding could have memorialized particularly intimate unions such as these. Unfortunately, it is hardly ever possible to say for certain. Disappointingly little is known about the private lives of the couples represented in the pose. None the less, what evidence there is is suggestive. Richard II and his queen, a couple known to have been devoted, are shown holding hands on their monument in Westminster Abbey, and the pose was depicted at the king's request. John of Gaunt and his first wife, another devoted couple, were shown with the hand-holding pose on their tomb in St Paul's Cathedral. Equally illuminating is a case from early in the next century, that of the Lancastrian esquire Robert Hatfield and his wife Ada, who are commemorated by a brass at Owston (Yorks.) (Fig. 60). On their epitaph the two are described as being 'fully in right love' and, on the brass above, they are shown holding hands. Robert commissioned the memorial on his wife's death in 1409. There can be little doubt that he drafted the touching epitaph himself. This was a husband's tribute to a wife whom he sorely missed.

There is good evidence, then, that in at least some cases hand-holding may have denoted mutual affection. However, there remains a second problem—the possible significance of the variations in the positions of the hands. As Peter Coss has shown, the subjects' hands are shown in a number of different poses on their

memorials. On some, the lady's hand is taken firmly in the grasp of her husband's, implying a relationship of male dominance. On others the hands are merely pressed against one another, as if to imply a more equal tie; while on a minority, notably the de la Pole brass at Chrishall (Essex), a third pose occurs—the lady grasping the man's hand, implying the dominance of the lady. As with the issue of hand-holding more generally, the difficulty arises of distinguishing the respective roles of artistic convention and client influence. The notion that clients might have wanted a particular hand-pose to be depicted is not inconceivable given their tendency to be prescriptive in their contracts. All the same there is a dearth of evidence to support such a proposition in the sources. On those occasions when hand-holding is specified in contracts it is usually without reference to position. Katherine Green, for example, said simply that 'the hand of one figure was to hold the hand of the other'. On balance, the likelihood must be that artistic convention was the key determinant of the pose. Two memorials which lend support to such an idea are the brasses at Trotton (Sussex), 1421 and Herne (Kent), *c*.1430. On both memorials, the hands are pressed flat against one another. The two brasses originated from the same workshop—the style 'D' workshop in London—and date from within a few years of one another. The second is simply a scaled-down version of the first. There is no individuality in the design; the same drawing pattern was used for both. It is possible that a similar conclusion is to be drawn from two well-known brasses at the beginning of the series—the beautiful examples at Chrishall and Southacre. The Chrishall brass differs from the others in one significant respect: it is the only one to show the lady grasping the man's hand. The distinctiveness of the pose disappears, however, once it is appreciated that the position of the hands is merely a mirror image of that on the Southacre brass (Fig. 71). In each case it is the figure on the right (the sinister) which engages the other's hand. But whereas at Chrishall it is the lady who is on the right, at Southacre it is the husband.

Yet, as Coss has suggested, it is possible that a different explanation may be offered for this particular pose. It could be that the person shown clasping the other's hand is the one accorded dominance in the relationship. Joan de la Pole, shown alongside her husband at Chrishall, was an heiress: she was the daughter and only surviving child of John, Lord Cobham; she brought status and wealth to her husband. It may be that her superior standing is indicated by the fact that she clasps her husband's hand and not vice versa. Against this possibility, however, should be set the absence of a similar pose on the brass of another hand-holding heiress, the memorial of Joan, Lady Stapleton, and her husband, *c*.1364, at Ingham (Norfolk). Joan was the daughter of Oliver, Lord Ingham, and brought her husband wide estates in East Anglia. But on their memorial he was shown conventionally clasping her hand.

The brass at Ingham, as we have seen, comes right at the start of the hand-holding series. Greater variety in representation of the pose is found on a small number of memorials from towards the end. At Nether Heyford (Northants), on one of the last brasses of all, Sir Walter Mauntell (d. 1487) and his wife, Elizabeth, are shown with their hands pressed fully in each other's

Figure 71. Southacre (Norfolk): Sir John Harsick (d. 1384) and his wife. Rubbing of brass

fold. Absolute equality is expressed: a significant position because Elizabeth was an heiress and was described as such on the inscription.[21] On another late brass, that of Sir Robert del Bothe (d. 1460) and his wife at Wilmslow (Cheshire), the mode of representation takes on still greater significance. The lady is shown unusually as a bride; her hair is loose, and she and her husband clasp each other's right hand, displaying wedding rings on the free hand. On memorials of this date representation of the clasped-hand pose is very infrequent. When the pose is represented, therefore, it must have been at the patron's request and in response to specific circumstances. It seems that in some cases the main consideration was probably the high status of the lady; in at least a few others, however, it is not inconceivable that it was the affection for each other of the two partners.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE FEMALE MONUMENT

Quite separate from the matter of intimacy between married couples is that of the woman's own identity on her monument. Were any particular attributes employed on women's monuments which may be considered distinctive to women? What, typically, were the hallmarks of a woman's monument?

On non-effigial monuments, particularly those in the north of England, female identity was usually indicated by symbols. Traditionally, the sword was associated with the man, and the key or shears with the woman. On the tombs of married couples, these symbols were arranged in the customary husband and wife positions, on the dexter and sinister sides respectively of a central symbol, usually the cross.[22] The origins of the association between shears or key symbols and female identity are obscure. However, it is possible that there was a distant connection with pagan burial practice.

On effigial monuments the attribute most commonly associated with women was the lapdog below the woman's feet. In his contract of 1466 with Reames, Richard Willoughby specifically asked for a dog with a collar of bells to be shown at the bottom of his wife's effigy.[23] The dog, the symbol of fidelity, was the counterpart to the lion, the symbol of strength, at the foot of men's effigies. Occasionally on monuments the dog was named, giving it an identity of its own. Lady Cassy's lapdog 'Terri' was shown named on the brass to her and her husband at Deerhurst (Glos.) (Fig. 64). Since the Cassys' brass was almost certainly commissioned by Lady Cassy after her husband's death, it is likely that the naming of the dog represents a personal initiative on her part.

Other personal attributes make more irregular appearances on monuments. At Axminster (Devon), an unidentified lady of *c*.1300 is shown holding a kind of reliquary with an image of the Virgin and Child. On some monuments women were

[21] Mauntell's will is disappointingly uninformative on both the brass and his relationship with his wife: TNA: PRO, PROB 11/8, fo. 65r.

[22] L. Butler, 'Symbols on Medieval Memorials', *Archaeological Jnl.* 144 (1987), 246–55.

[23] Saul, 'Contract for the Brass of Richard Willoughby', 167.

represented with mementoes or keepsakes. At Abergavenny Priory a lady is shown with an object in her hands, now worn, which could have been a pet squirrel.[24] Generally, however, the range of attributes depicted was fairly limited—even on early monuments, which were less stereotyped than those of later date. On seals women were sometimes shown holding a lily in their right hand as a symbol of the Virgin Mary. This was a pose rarely, if ever, transposed to monuments.

On big late medieval monuments gendered identity was most clearly reflected in the selection of saints as sponsors and mediators. Female saints tended naturally to feature more often as sponsors on women's monuments than on the monuments of men. On the brass which she commissioned to herself at Tattershall (Lincs.), *c*.1475, Maud, Lady Willoughby placed female saints in one full buttress of the canopy. The saints of her choice were Sts Anne, Helen, Zita, and Elizabeth. St Anne, mother of the Virgin, was a very popular choice on monuments to women; at Tattershall she also figures on the companion brass to Maud's sister, Joan. St Helen, the second saint, was a choice more personal to Maud because she discovered the True Cross, of which Tattershall housed a relic. St Zita again reflects the personal taste of the commemorated: Zita, a serving girl of Lucca noted for her devotion, was the focus of a cult which spread quickly through Europe from the late thirteenth century. In England her name figures with particular frequency in calendars in Lincolnshire, where she appears to have won a local following. On many memorials the presence of the Virgin and Child in the subsidiary imagery is a hallmark of female patronage. On Maud's brass at Tattershall a representation of the Virgin and Child originally featured in the apex of the canopy. On the Cassy brass at Deerhurst the inclusion of St Anne teaching the Virgin Mary to read is another indication of Lady Alice's patronage. At Dauntsey (Wilts.) Lady Anne Danvers chose female saints for the glazing of the window immediately above her tomb recess and brass.[25]

The appearance of eucharistic imagery on or near the monuments of women may likewise be an indication of gendered interest and tastes. There is some evidence that a devotion to the body, wounds, heart, and blood of Christ was a distinctive feature of female piety in the late Middle Ages. Echoes of such interests are to be found in the design or location of some of the grander women's tomb monuments of the period. At Asthall (Oxon.), for example, an aumbry, in which the sacrament might have been kept, is placed immediately next to Lady Cornwall's tomb suggesting a desire to associate the monument with a physical token of Christ's suffering humanity.[26] It may also be significant that, in the window above the tomb, the scroll from Lady Cornwall's donor figure is directed to a Crucifixion, almost touching the wounds in Christ's body. When viewed in its physical setting, the Cornwall monument affords strong evidence of the female patron's interest in imagery of the body of Christ. How widespread such interest

[24] The object was still extant in 1800, when it was identified as a squirrel: J. Newman, *Gwent/Monmouthshire* (Harmondsworth, 2000), 94–5.

[25] These were Sts Mary Magdalen, Katherine, Margaret, and Dorothy: Macnamara, *Memorials of the Danvers Family*, 251. The glass is now mainly lost.

[26] Mair, 'The Cornwall Chapel'.

was, however, or how distinctive its associations with female patronage may have been, are both difficult to say.

In general, what is noteworthy is less the appearance on monuments of these attributes of female identity than the narrowness of their range and the relative scarcity of their use. Strangely, the woman's place in the life-cycle was given sharper definition in tomb sculpture than womanhood as such. Single women, for example, were generally shown as maidens with their hair untied, while widows were shown in the distinctive attire of widowhood.

The main reason for the lack of interest in womanhood was that in medieval tomb sculpture stronger emphasis was placed on the group, particularly the family group, than on the individual. The woman was seen principally as a member of a lineage, as the bearer of a family's history identity. By the fifteenth century the married woman was invariably shown on monuments as the matriarch—located in the company of her family, her husband beside her and her children below.

On the bigger aristocratic monuments of the period the woman might find herself, too, absorbed into the chivalric identity of the age. Noble women's tombs were usually decked out in all the trappings of a colourful chivalry. Shields of arms were often included on the architectural surrounds of the tomb, as at Newton (Suffolk) and Much Marcle and Ledbury (Heref.). Shields were sometimes placed on the effigy itself. On monuments at Rand (Lincs.) (Fig. 72) and Abergavenny Priory a single big shield was placed on the centre of the figure, while at Trotton (Sussex) and Worcester Cathedral smaller shields were scattered over the surface of the woman's gown.[27] Fifteenth-century women—those at Long Melford, for example—were sometimes shown in heraldic mantles. Women's absorption in the chivalric values of their menfolk is likewise evident in their patronage of their husbands' tombs. At Lingfield Reginald Cobham's tomb, which his widow commissioned, is adorned with the arms of his tenurial overlords and his companions on the campaign trail (Fig. 52).[28] Generally, in the funerary depiction of women it was the values and conventions of the male world which were dominant. Just occasionally, a note of intimacy could creep in. On the inscription on his tomb at Forde Abbey the earl of Devon (d. 1419) spoke lovingly of his 55 years of happy marriage:

> What we gave, we have
> What we spent, we had
> What we left, we lost.[29]

[27] The figures at Rand and Abergavenny are both of high quality. The former commemorates a lady of the Burdet family, who held the manor, and the latter probably Eva de Braose (d. 1257). The authentic-looking alcove in which the Rand figure is placed is 19th cent. For an example of a shield placed over the effigy of a 'sunken' lady, see the mid-14th-cent. effigy at Thurlaston (Leics.). The celebrated brass of Margaret de Camoys, *c.*1310, at Trotton has nine shields on the gown (their inlays now lost). A freestone effigy of a lady, probably of the Warenne family, at Worcester, now lost, was similarly treated; it is illustrated in W. Thomas, *Survey of the Cathedral Church of Worcester* (London, 1737), 39.

[28] See above, 217.

[29] Nicolas, *The Controversy between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor*, ii. 237.

Figure 72. Rand (Lincs.): a lady, probably of the Burdet family, *c.*1310

Such affectionate touches, however, were relatively rare. Even when a gesture indicating affection, such as the clasped-hand pose, appears, its interpretation is uncertain. In the public domain, where funerary monuments were sited, it was generally formal patriarchy which ruled.

13

The Cult of the Macabre

The cult of the macabre, a mainly north European phenomenon, produced some of the most extraordinary monuments of the Middle Ages. The deceased, instead of being shown as he or she had looked in life, was shown as a putrefying corpse or skeleton. The idealized effigy was replaced by its opposite, the *representation de la mort*. In place of the traditional conception of the monument as an ensign to status came a rival conception—the tomb as a challenge, a *memento mori*. Its motto to the beholder was: your time will come; as I am now, so shall you be.

Tombs on which the effigy is presented as a corpse are called *transis* in French and, most commonly, cadaver tombs in English.[1] They took a variety of forms. In one type the decomposing body was shown alone, either on a brass or as an effigy in the round on top of a tomb. In another, the 'double-decker', the decomposing body was placed half-hidden below an effigy of the deceased *au vif*, the juxtaposition of the two highlighting the message of the inevitability of death. Other compositions again showed the kneeling shrouded figure of the commemorated rising from his tomb as on the Day of Judgement. The depiction of the body itself varied greatly. In a minority the deceased was shown as a putrefying corpse or skeleton (never popular in England). Many more examples, particularly in two-dimensional form, showed the deceased recently dead, wrapped in a shroud. Even within this genre of shroud memorials there was immense variation. On some memorials the eyes were shown open, on others firmly closed. On some the deceased was shown in a state of repose, on others with a gruesome grin. In general, English examples of cadaver monuments are less exotic than their Continental counterparts. In this country there are very few equivalents of the extraordinary monument (post-1363) of François de la Sarra at La Sarraz, Switzerland, showing the verminous effigy of the deceased being eaten away by a multitude of worms and toads.[2]

INTERPRETATIONS OF THE MACABRE

How is the striking late medieval phenomenon of cadaver monuments to be interpreted? Conventionally, as Binski has said, there have been two approaches

[1] Except where a more specific term is needed, for convenience the word 'cadaver' will be used in this discussion.

[2] The nearest equivalents are the Wakeman cenotaph tomb, *c.*1510, in Tewkesbury Abbey and the brass of Ralph Hamsterley, *c.*1515, at Oddington (Oxon.), on both of which the corpse is shown being devoured by vermin—in the case of the Oddington brass, by snake-like worms.

to explaining the new understandings of death. The first may be described as the exogenous approach, laying stress on causes external to the culture of contemporary society, and the other the endogenous, emphasizing causes internal to that culture.[3]

In the first approach, the origins of the late medieval preoccupation with death imagery are found in the demographic disasters of the period, in particular the Black Death and successor plagues. The most eloquent and influential statement of this view was proposed by Millard Meiss in his *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (1951).[4] Meiss argued that the coming of the plague marked a watershed in Italian civic and artistic life. Not only was artistic production disrupted, as established masters like the Lorenzetti brothers were carried off by the disease; more substantially there was a change in the visual language of art. The humane values which had characterized the best thirteenth-century work were now abandoned in favour of more austere and hieratic subject matter. In place of the humanity and intimacy characteristic of the work of Giotto, there was now a remote formalism in which figures were increasingly distanced from each other and isolated. Italian religious art took on a darker, more atavistic hue. The mood of pessimism and renunciation of life evinced by the flagellant processions were reflected in an art of awestruck transcendentalism. From the 1360s images of death and the Last Judgement, rare in painting half a century before, figured with grim regularity in the repertory of the main artists.

Meiss's view found many echoes in the broader literature on the period. In the popular mind cadaver monuments are indelibly associated with the Black Death and its aftermath. Yet there are problems of both chronology and causation with Meiss's ideas. If plague were the principal cause of the late medieval preoccupation with death, it is difficult to explain why cadaver monuments did not become fashionable until the fifteenth century. They are not a product of the immediate aftermath of the plague; on the Continent the earliest examples date from the 1380s, while in England, after an isolated example of *c*.1370–5, there are no further examples until *c*.1425. If the coming of the plague had such a devastating cultural impact, it would be natural to expect major manifestations of it in funerary art much earlier. A second problem relates to the geographical distribution of macabre monuments. Monuments of this kind are principally a north European phenomenon: they are found in the British Isles, northern and central France, Flanders, and Switzerland; they are largely absent from Spain, Mediterranean France, and Italy. The mortality caused by the plague, however, was a pan-European phenomenon. If the appearance of death imagery on monuments were a direct response to the plague, it might be expected that such imagery would be more evenly distributed than it is.

Because of the difficulties raised by Meiss's ideas, the alternative explanation, stressing endogenous factors, has generally attracted greater favour. For most modern studies, the starting-point of discussion has been Johan Huizinga's *Waning of the Middle Ages* (1924), a powerful and highly influential study which

[3] P. Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (London, 1996), 126.
[4] M. Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951).

examined aristocratic society in fifteenth-century France and Burgundy. Huizinga's assumptions were broadly Hegelian. He saw all the most characteristic literary and artistic works of the period as expressive of a spirit which, he believed, 'unites all the cultural products of an age and makes them homogeneous'. The dominant characteristics of late medieval culture were an overblown, escapist chivalry, a growing formality in court etiquette, and what he considered an outmoded scholasticism; these were all interdependent and were to be explained in relation to each other. At the same time, he thought in terms of biological metaphors. He conceived of history in terms of a cycle of birth and death: '. . . in history, as in nature, birth and death are equally balanced'. The rise of a culture must be balanced by its decline. Medieval culture had risen in the eleventh and twelfth centuries; its heyday had come and gone. In the post-Black Death period it was 'waning'. Huizinga never made a direct connection between culture and the plague: given his Hegelian assumptions, it was not necessary. But he saw the preoccupation with death as pervasive: 'No other epoch has laid so much stress as the expiring Middle Ages on the thought of death.' The mood of the age was one of pessimism, anxiety, and insecurity. 'A sombre melancholy weighed on people's souls. Whether we read a chronicle, a poem, a sermon . . . the same impression of sadness is produced by them all.'[5] Nowhere in the literature of northern Europe did Huizinga find anything comparable with the positive life-affirming values of writing in Renaissance Italy.

Huizinga's thesis had the attraction of offering an explanation for something which Meiss did not explain—the peculiar geography of late medieval death imagery. We have seen that shroud and cadaver monuments are a characteristic of the commemorative culture mainly of northern Europe; they rarely figure on tombs south of the Alps.[6] In Huizinga's reconstruction, only the culture of northern Europe was infected by the mood of melancholy and pessimism; south of the Alps escaped: here the positive humanistic culture of the Renaissance took root. Only in northern Europe were there to be found the necessary conditions for the growth of an exotic funerary death culture.

Huizinga's thesis had one other great advantage: it integrated the imagery of death into medieval culture as a whole rather than treating it as a curious aberration: in consequence of this the phenomenon of the cadaver was made a cultural phenomenon of general significance. Yet, just as Meiss's theory presents difficulties, so too does Huizinga's. Huizinga's interpretation of late medieval culture was dependent on a reading of the Middle Ages which no longer commands general acceptance. The assumption which Huizinga made of a contrast between an 'ideal' period of medieval culture and a subsequent decline is hardly sustainable when so many of the unsavoury aspects supposedly unique to late medieval culture are clearly to be found in earlier periods. If, as Huizinga argued, violence, disorder, and disease were among the characteristics of late medieval life, then so were they too of life in earlier centuries. Why the death culture should have been so

[5] J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (London, 1924, repr. 1965), 124, 23.

[6] One example is the tomb of Archbishop Salterelli (d. 1342) in Santa Caterina, Pisa, for which see below, 328.

dominant in the fifteenth century is a question which ultimately Huizinga never answered.

In recent years favour has been given to a different explanation of broadly endogenous character. This is that the function of the death imagery on monuments was to act as a *memento mori*, a visual challenge to the conscience of the living. The beholder, gazing on the grisly image, would be prompted to reflect on his mortality, repent and correct his ways. Such an explanation may be regarded as particularly appropriate for tombs which patrons commissioned in their lifetimes. These were designed very deliberately to be objects of contemplation. At Canterbury, for example, Archbishop Chichele, well before his death in 1443, commissioned a 'double-decker' monument opposite his throne on which he could see himself clothed in rich Eucharistic vestments on the upper level and as a shrunken cadaver beneath. The moral of the monument was clear: Chichele's end would come. The cadaver tomb acted as a mirror: it presented the beholder with an image of his own mortality.

To interpret the cadaver monument as a *memento mori* has the attraction of locating it historically where it belongs: in the context of contemporary thinking on preparation for the afterlife. The monument is seen, exactly as it should be, as playing an active role in strategies for salvation: it was concerned to engage the onlooker and to compel him (or her) to commence preparation for the moment of death. Yet the character of the monument still presents difficulties. Traditionally, the function of a funerary monument was to attract intercessory prayer to aid the soul's passage though purgatory. The cadaver monument did not do this: or, at least, it did not do it in the traditional way. It was not so much a mnemonic prompt to intercession for the deceased; rather it constituted a challenge to the beholder himself. Only when the person beholding the monument was the person actually commemorated by it—as in the case of Archbishop Chichele—was the monument performing its traditional function. If the cadaver monument was thus in a limited sense still performing an active role, it was a role which entailed some degree of novelty. A new and highly complex relationship was created with the onlooker. When a patron commissioned a cadaver monument, he or she was indulging in a taste for the unconventional. It follows that when he or she embarked on that course, that person is likely to have given the matter very careful thought indeed.

PATTERNS OF PATRONAGE

Records survive of some 175 cadaver monuments in England, ranging in size from massive 'double-decker' monuments to small shroud brasses. These stretch across a period of roughly a century and a half, from *c.*1425 to the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. The earliest recorded English cadaver is the small brass half-figure, of which the indent alone survives, at Brightwell Baldwin (Oxon.), *c.*1370–5, to John the Smith. This is an isolated example, without immediate sequel and without any

obvious context. It is possible that the memorial was the product of local clerical patronage, and it may have commemorated a plague victim.[7]

The continuous series of English cadaver monuments begins some forty years later, in the mid-1420s. By this time, cadavers had been commissioned continuously on the Continent for some thirty or forty years. The probability must be that the main English series is of Continental derivation. Cadaver monuments as a genre appear to have originated in the French-speaking world in the late fourteenth century. Among the earliest surviving examples are the brasses of Walter Copman (d. 1387) and his wife at Bruges, and the stone effigies of Guillaume de Harcigny (d. 1393) at Laon, France, and François de la Sarra (d. *c.*1363, but monument later) at La Sarraz, Switzerland. The genre was taken up in England in the early fifteenth century by a group of ecclesiastics of intellectual tastes who were attracted to the funerary avant-garde. It may be significant that the greatest concentration of English examples is in eastern and south-eastern England. These were precisely the areas most open to Continental influence.

One way of approaching an understanding of the cadaver monument is to examine it in terms of patronage—to ask who were the patrons of these monuments, and how, if at all, they were connected. If a network, or a series of networks, of patrons can be identified, it might be possible to identify the channels through which an interest in the monuments was disseminated and even to say something about the sources of their appeal.

Of particular help in this respect has been Pamela King's analysis of the patrons of cadaver monuments in the mid-fifteenth century. King has identified a well-defined client network centring on the Lancastrian court and the Lancastrian retinue in the country.[8] At its heart were a group of senior clerics with court connections—Archbishop Chichele, a close friend of Henry V, his contemporary Bishop Fleming of Lincoln, his protégé Bishop Beckington of Wells, and Thomas Heywood, dean of Lichfield.[9] From the 1440s, alongside this clerical group there developed a number of sometimes overlapping lay networks. In East Anglia a highly significant figure was John Baret, a crown annuitant and associate of members of the powerful de la Pole and Beaufort connections. Baret commissioned a cadaver monument to himself in St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds;[10] King believes that his modish memorial was the probable source of inspiration for the shroud brass commissioned

[7] For discussion, see P. Binski, 'John the Smith's Grave', in S. L'Engle and G. B. Guest (eds.), *Tributes to Jonathan J.G. Alexander: The Making and Meaning of Illuminated Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts, Art and Architecture* (London, 2006), 386–93. The opening of the extant inscription, one of the earliest in English ('Man com and se how schal alle dede be . . . ') points to the existence of a cadaver, and this is confirmed by the worn indent of an accompanying figure, which shows a topknot. It is possible that the idea of a cadaver was suggested by wall paintings in the church.

[8] P. M. King, 'The English Cadaver Tomb in the Late Fifteenth Century: Some Indications of a Lancastrian Connection', in J. H. M. Taylor (ed.), *Dies Illa: Death in the Middle Ages* (Liverpool, 1984), 45–55.

[9] To these may perhaps be added John Newton, treasurer of York Minster: P. M. King, 'The Treasurer's Cadaver in York Minster Reconsidered', in C. Barron and J. Stratford (eds.), *The Church and Learning in Late Medieval Society: Studies in Honour of R.B. Dobson* (Donington, 2002), 196–209.

[10] See below, 317–19.

a decade later to Baret's niece Mary Drury at Thorndon (Suffolk). In the Thames valley another circle of patrons with court connections centred on a group of gentry or aristocratic women—Agnes Bulstrode at Upton (Bucks.), Eleanor, wife of Robert Hungerford, Lord Moleyns at Stoke Poges (Bucks.), and most strikingly Alice, duchess of Suffolk, at Ewelme (Fig. 70). In the east Midlands two more patrons of cadaver effigies with court connections were William Catesby of Ashby St Ledgers and Richard Willoughby of Wollaton. Catesby was a one-time trencher knight of Henry VI, while Willoughby, an MP in the 1440s, was connected with the Booths, a family who supplied two members of the Lancastrian episcopate.[11]

When it is remembered that cadavers were never more than a minority taste, it is striking how many of them were commissioned by courtiers or men and women with court connections. The taste for cadaver effigies appears to have originated with a group of courtier bishops of refined taste, spreading by the 1430s to their lay associates at court, and from them to the wider Lancastrian affinity in the country. Cadaver monuments commissioned as late as the 1470s sometimes honoured people whose tastes had been formed in the heyday of the Lancastrian ascendancy.

In addition to the main client networks centring on the court and its hangers-on, there were other, more localized, networks of clientage. In Hertfordshire the Leventhorpes of Sawbridgeworth appear to have initiated a taste for shroud brasses which quickly spread among the trading class of the county. In 1448 John Leventhorpe, member of a dynasty of Lancastrian administrators, commissioned a shroud brass to himself and his wife in Sawbridgeworth church. Forty years later, his example was followed by another gentleman, William Roberts, who laid a shroud brass to his wife Joyce at nearby Digswell; Joyce's family, the Peryents, had Lancastrian connections.[12] By the last twenty years of the century the taste for shroud brasses was being embraced by members of the burgess elite right across the county. At Hitchin no fewer than five brasses of this sort were laid between 1477 and 1500. The patrons were all members of the confraternity of St Mary, based in the church, and commemoration by a shroud brass seems to have become a mark of group identity.[13] The pattern was not dissimilar elsewhere. In 1495 John Shelley, a London mercer, commissioned a shroud brass to his wife Margaret at Hunsdon, near his landholdings in the county. Around the same time at Ware an unidentified married couple and their child were commemorated by a large shroud brass, of which indents remain.[14] Shroud brasses were a fashionable conceit among the townsmen of late fifteenth-century Hertfordshire.

It is possible to identify localized concentrations of shroud brasses in other parts of the country. In East Anglia a particular concentration is found in Norfolk, especially in the north and east of the county. Virtually all of these brasses are

[11] Bertram (ed.), *The Catesby Family and their Brasses at Ashby St Ledgers*, 9, 46–59; Saul, 'The Contract for the Brass of Richard Willoughby' (2006).

[12] P. M. King, '"My Image to be made all naked": Cadaver Tombs and the Commemoration of Women in Fifteenth-Century England', *The Ricardian*, 13 (2003), 294–314.

[13] H. C. Andrews, 'Two Altar Tombs at Hitchin Church', *TMBS* 8 (1943–51), 192–5.

[14] For a drawing, see BL, Add MS 9062, fo. 218r.

products of the prolific Norwich workshop which appears to have produced them in some number. Small shroud or skeleton brasses of Norwich origin are found at, among other places, Brampton, Frenze, Aylsham, and Loddon. Once again, most of the client class were drawn from the ranks of the burgesses, clergy, and lesser landowners. There was a small but well-defined network of clients in the prosperous cloth-making town of Aylsham.

Another localized concentration of shroud brasses is found in east Kent. Here, as in Hertfordshire, the initial spur was given by someone with court connections. In 1431 William Mareys, an esquire of Henry V and household official of Cardinal Beaufort, commissioned a half-effigy shroud brass for his wife Joan, at Sheldwich (Fig. 73).[15] This was probably the model for two other small shroud

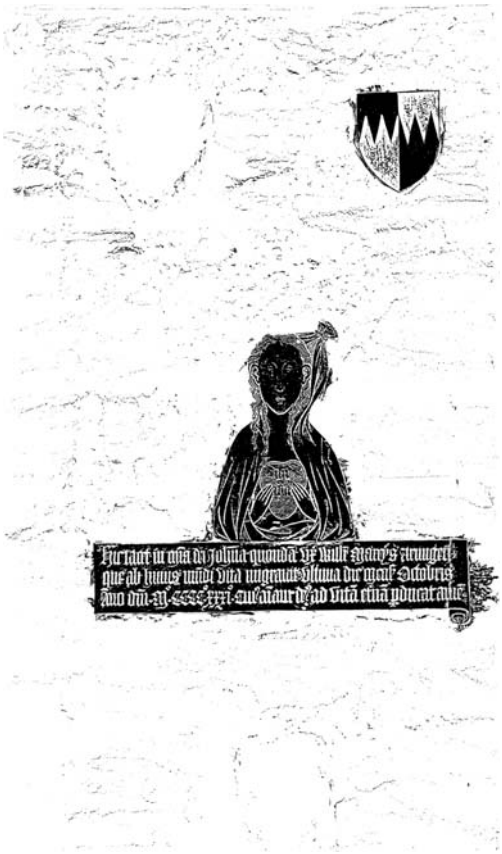

Figure 73. Sheldwich (Kent): Joan Mareys (d. 1431). Rubbing of brass

[15] For Mareys, see G. L. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort* (Oxford, 1988), 360–2, 383; S. Robertson, 'Preston Church, next Faversham', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 21 (1895), 130–1.

brasses in the Canterbury area—those of Joan Bamme at Gillingham, now lost, and Richard Notfield at Margate.[16] Significantly all three brasses are from the same workshop, London 'E'.

Fifty years later, at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, shroud brasses attracted a clientele more occupationally than geographically defined, centring on a group of academics and clerks of bookish disposition. One member of the group was John More (d. 1489), a well-read Kent clerk, probably a graduate, who commissioned a shroud brass to himself at Tenterden. More was an associate of Thomas Linacre, the Greek scholar, and owned a well-stocked library.[17] At Oxford there was a circle of men of similar tastes—Thomas Fleming, Ralph Hamsterley, and John Claimond, all commemorated by shroud or skeleton brasses.[18] It is possible that the fashion owed something to the taste of a leading bishop, Richard Fox of Winchester. Fox had been commemorated by a cadaver effigy incorporated into the base of his chantry chapel in the cathedral. Claimond, the first President of Corpus Christi College, had been an associate of the bishop, who had founded the College.[19]

To analyse group networks in this way offers valuable insights into the spread of cadaver monuments in the later fifteenth century. Through the medium of such reconstruction, a window is opened onto the social as well the religious influences which played a role in dissemination of the genre; at the same time, an explanation is offered for what would otherwise be difficult to explain—namely, why the fashion took root among some groups but not others. Yet there are several questions which such investigation leaves unanswered. The most obvious relates to individual taste and motivation. Any analysis based on reconstructing networks tends to assume, rather than to establish, networking as an agent of causation. Where personal documentation is lacking, there may be no alternative to making assumptions about the role of networking in the formation of taste. All the same, it is important to remember that such broad-brush methodology has drawbacks: the positive exercise of choice cannot be distinguished from the mere following of example. Nor can genuine piety be distinguished from shared adherence to a fashionable religion. Moreover, still more critically, group analysis sheds no light on the thinking and motivation of those who pioneered the fashion in the first place.

There is a second, and related, difficulty. While the analysis of networks sheds light on the channels through which a taste for cadaver monuments was disseminated, it does little to explain their curiously uneven geographical distribution; in particular, it fails to account for the marked concentration of

[16] Bamme's brass is known from a Fisher drawing: see R. Griffin and M. Stephenson, *A List of Monumental Brasses remaining in the County of Kent in 1992* (London and Ashford, 1922), pl. 25. She was the daughter of John Martyn, Justice of Common Pleas, who was commemorated by a brass at Graveney, and whom Mareys would have known: ibid. 111, 113.

[17] R. H. D'Elboux, 'Some Kentish Indents, III', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 60 (1947), 61–2.

[18] Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, i. 428–30; ii. 700, 864–5.

[19] P. D. Sherlock, 'Academic Commemoration: Monuments at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1517–1700', *CM* 14 (1999), 81.

examples in eastern England. It may be that a completely different reason has to be found for these peculiarities of geography. One obvious point is that the areas with the largest number of examples were those most open to the working of Continental influence. Conceivably, the large numbers of cadaver brasses in Norfolk have less to do with the working of clientage than with the import of popular images from the Low Countries. The easy availability of woodcuts of such subjects as the Three Living and the Three Dead may have fed an appetite for tombs and brasses in the same idiom. Those who made monuments would have had a range of models to work from.

THE MACABRE AS AN EXPRESSION OF TASTE

Although cadaver monuments were laid in some number by the late fifteenth century, it would be wrong to see them as ever enjoying a mass appeal. Even at the height of their popularity, they were never more than the acquired taste of a refined minority. We have seen that, in all, no more than about 175 examples have come down to us. By comparison, at the end of the Middle Ages many hundreds of military or civilian effigies were produced every year. It is unlikely that in any workshop there were ever any 'off the peg' *transi* monuments ready for purchase on demand. Even in the years around 1500 production was always driven by individual commissions. In this sense, every time an order for a cadaver monument was placed an individual client choice was being made.

Explaining the appeal of cadavers, therefore, involves analysing the complex and overlapping matrix of influences operating on those who commissioned them. Account needs to be taken of the patron's piety, his tastes in devotional reading, his kinship and social networks, and the arrangements which he made for his funerary and liturgical commemoration. Unfortunately, the documentary evidence relating to these matters is usually limited. Only in a handful of cases do we have wills for any of those who commissioned cadavers. Altogether exceptional are the draft specifications, surviving in the National Archives, for a cadaver monument commemorating John Ormond and his wife (d. 1507) at Alfreton (Derby.).[20] For just one or two of the commemorated, however, we do have enough information to illuminate the cultural ambience which helped to shape a taste for the exotic. It would be wrong to assume that these individuals were necessarily representative of the patron group as a whole. None the less, it is worth taking advantage of the available documentation to see what insights into motivation consideration of a few case studies can provide.

One of the most striking cadaver monuments is that of the wealthy cloth merchant, John Baret (d. 1467), in St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds (Suffolk). The monument, at the east end of the south aisle, consists of a grisly skeletal effigy placed

[20] TNA: PRO, SP46/181/5. Unfortunately the document is faded and is deemed unfit for production. I am grateful to Jon Bayliss for drawing it to my attention.

on top of a panelled chest. Baret commissioned the monument in his lifetime: it was already in place when he drew up his will in 1463. It was originally the focal-point of an elaborate chantry chapel to the design and decoration of which Baret devoted considerable attention in his later years. Today only the monument and the panelled roof of the chapel survive, eloquent witnesses to his taste still, though shorn of most of the surroundings which gave them meaning.

Something of the religious and cultural world which Baret inhabited can be learned from his lengthy will.[21] Baret, like many of the fashionably pious of his day, subscribed to the view that it was important to die well. He owned a copy of an *Ars moriendi* text, the *Disce mori* (learn to die), which gave instruction in how to prepare for death. It seems very likely that the contents of this book had an influence on the arrangements which he made for his funeral and subsequent supplication for his soul; quite possibly, indeed, it was this book which planted the idea of a cadaver effigy in his mind.

Baret's thinking owed something as well to the writings, a generation before, of Bury's local monk-poet, John Lydgate. Baret was well familiar with Lydgate's work: in his will he was to bequeath a copy of his poem, *Siege of Thebes*, of *c*.1420.[22] In the late 1420s Lydgate had composed a translation into English of the verses accompanying the sequence of Dance of Death paintings in the cemetery church of the Holy Innocents at Paris. In 1430 he consented to this text being inscribed alongside the similar sequence in St Paul's churchyard, London. The Dance of Death, a variant of the theme of the Three Living and the Three Dead, depicted a row of skeletal figures leading individuals of all ranks in a morbid dance to the grave. Every onlooker could see his or her fate reflected in the painting. This familiar trope of the mirror of mortality made its appearance in the opening verses of Lydgate's poem: proud folk, who were 'so stout and bold', could see in the text the 'sudden violence' which would bring an end to their own passage through life. Baret made great play with the mirror conceit on his tomb. At the head he placed the inscription

> He that wil sadly beholde one with his ie
> May se hys owyn merowr and lerne for to die.

The idea of the mirror of mortality was developed visually in the iconography of the tomb, which showed the deceased both in death and in life. On the top was placed the decaying figure of the deceased, wrapped in a winding shroud. The words *Ego nunc in pulvere dormio* ('I sleep now in dust') were placed near the head. In one of the side panels, dwarfed by the emblem of mortality, was placed a diminutive figure of the living Baret, erect in his best attire, and with the SS collar which he had been awarded by Henry VI, a symbol of status. The same idea was picked up again in the imagery of the chapel in which the tomb was sited. Baret had directed that 'three mirrors of glass . . . be set in the midst of the three vaults above my grave, which be ready with my other glasses and divers rolls with

[21] *Wills and Inventories of the Commissary of Bury St Edmunds*, ed. S. Tymms (Camden Soc., 1850), 15–44.

[22] Ibid. 35.

scripture'. There were multiple mirrors embedded in this ingenious conceit. The cadaver itself lay beneath the glimmer of a celestial vault which reflected back on the shrinking corporeal substance. At the same time, onlookers gazing at the tomb would think of the cadaverous Baret as their own instructive mirror. Just as Baret now was, a decaying corpse, so would they shortly be: the maxim of every tomb with a cadaver effigy on it.

For a second example of the cultural background to commemoration by the macabre, we can take the case of the wealthy Londoner, Thomas Morys (d. 1506). Morys was unusual among those commemorated by cadavers in making detailed provision for such a memorial in his will:

> And my body to be buried in the hollye churche of St Thomas of Acres in Chepe in a convenyent place . . . and I will have an honyste stone layed on me in the same convenyent place, a marbull stone with an ymage of my selfe and another of my wife she of her goodness hath graunted to lye by me by cause it is an hollye place and dyvyne service there dayelie kept and the ymages that shulde be on the stone gravid lyke ii deade carkas as pitioulye made as canne be thoughte holdinge upp ouer handes in ouer wyndedinge sheats and a crosse to be made of the stone and my dead carkas knelinge at the fote of the crosse on the one side and the ymage of my wife in lyke manour on the other . . .[23]

In addition, Morys asked for invocatory scrolls issuing from the figures' mouths and an epitaph of conventional form at the foot requesting prayers for the two commemorated. His brass, assuming that it was laid in St Thomas's, is now lost, a victim of the Great Fire.

Morys made detailed testamentary provision for his tomb monument because, unlike Baret, he had not placed the commission in advance. In common with Baret, however, he was well aware that careful preparation had to be given to his meeting with his Maker. In his will he set aside considerable sums for prayerful intercession. He granted an endowment worth £20 annually to his Company, the Grocers, to provide for a priest to say masses for his soul in St Benet Hogg for twenty years after his death. At the same time, he made extensive charitable provision for the needy. He left £4 to be distributed among the poor householders in Cordwainer ward, where he lived. He set aside 40*s*. 'for the refreshing of the prisoners' in each of the four prisons in London and Southwark provided they prayed for him. He bequeathed 6*s*. to each of the Lazar houses in and around London, and 6*s*. 8*d*. to each of the four hospitals. And in a particularly thoughtful gesture he left 20*s*. for the purchase of coal for the inmates of the hospitals 'in winter when the weather is cold'. Finally, he left £20 to twenty poor maidens to assist them in their marriages. Morys was a man for whom the pains of purgatory were a vivid and deeply felt reality. The anguish he evidently felt may have been an influence shaping his tastes in commemoration.

For a third example of a monument playing on the theme of the macabre, we can take the monument of William Fettiplace (d. 1526) and his wife at Childrey (Berks.). This, unlike the other two, is a monument which survives virtually intact

[23] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/17, fos. 64^{r}–65^{r}.

(Fig. 74). Fettiplace was a scion of a wealthy south Midlands family who, through his wife, Elizabeth, had inherited a manor in Childrey. On his wife's death in 1516 he commissioned a monument with recessed canopy in the south chapel of Childrey church with brasses on the back showing the two of them rising from their tombs. Fettiplace was a man of deep, albeit rather conventional, piety. In the wake of his wife's death he had established a chantry in the church. The foundation was supported with lands in Childrey, Letcombe Bassett, and other neighbouring parishes. Fettiplace assigned responsibility for appointing the priest to the Provost and Fellows of the Queen's College, Oxford, where perhaps he had studied. Adjacent to the church he had established an almshouse for the maintenance of three poor men, to which a school was attached.[24] The pupil scholars were enjoined to say prayers for the souls of the founder and his wife. The model for the foundation may have been the duchess of Suffolk's foundation at Ewelme, not far away.

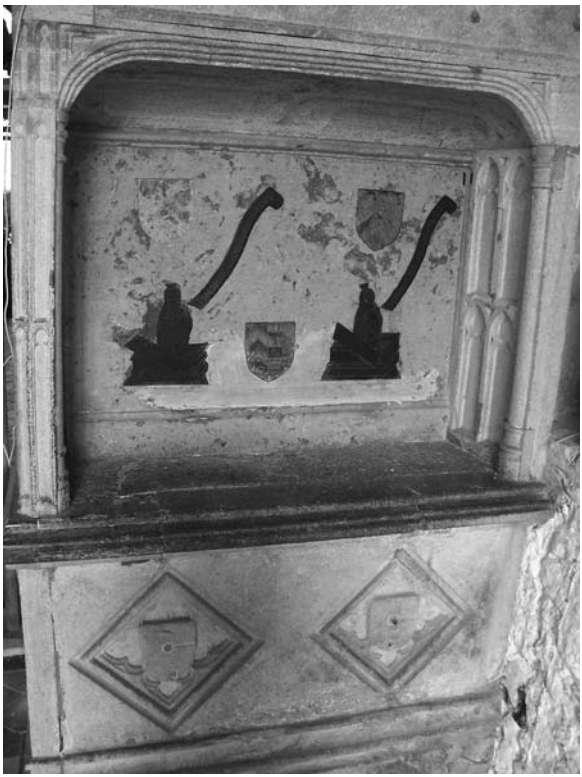

Figure 74. Childrey (Berks.): William Fettiplace (d. 1526) and his wife

[24] *VCH Berkshire* (London, 1924), iv. 272, 279.

Fettiplace's concern for his and his wife's souls is a notable characteristic of his long and detailed will.[25] He made elaborate preparations for his funerary obsequies. Twenty-four poor men, dressed in black, were to accompany his body to the grave and to intercede for him thereafter. Twelve torches were to burn in honour of the Almighty, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the apostles, these afterwards to be distributed among the churches on his estates. Twelve tapers, each weighing four pounds, were to be kept burning, these in honour of the Virgin and the Four Evangelists. The sum of twelve pence was to be given to each of the priests who attended his funeral. Among charitable bequests to aid his soul, Fettiplace set aside £2 for the inmates of Ludgate and Newgate prisons in London and the Marshalsea and King's Bench prisons in Southwark. In the main part of his will Fettiplace made extensive provision for intercessory supplication. He assigned £12 to be shared between the poorest divinity scholars in the University of Oxford to enable them both to pray for his and his wife's souls and 'to preach the word of God the next whole year' after his decease, the money to be distributed on the advice of the Provost and Fellows of the Queen's College. Fettiplace also left 40*s*. a year to each of the mendicant communities in Oxford for the saying of masses for his and his wife's souls, laying down precisely which prayers were to be said and which anthems sung. He also made provision for enlargement of the chantry foundation at Childrey by granting additional lands to the feoffees to augment the salaries payable to the chaplain and bedesmen. Fettiplace left nothing to chance. Like Baret, he was a man who, as he felt his end approaching, devoted close attention to the terms on which he was to meet his Maker. The tomb, with its distinctive imagery, was of a piece with the will and the preparations which had gone before.

Yet Fettiplace's tastes in commemoration were not shaped entirely by his fear of the pains to come. There are also signs that he was moved by a more optimistic outlook—by an expectation that death would be followed by the joy of the Resurrection. What suggests this is the evidence that he intended his tomb to double as an Easter Sepulchre. The flat-topped canopied recess over the chest is of exactly the kind in which the consecrated Host would be placed on Good Friday. Furthermore, the position of the tomb chest at right angles to the east wall of the chapel suggests proximity to an altar close by. In this context, it is significant that on the return wall of the tomb canopy is the indent of a brass which, to judge from its shape, appears to have shown the Resurrection. All the elements in the commemorative scheme—the setting of the tomb, its design, and the patron's choice of imagery—point to the monument playing a role in the rituals of the parish in Holy Week.

One final influence played a role in shaping Fettiplace's plans for remembrance. This was his family's—or, rather, his wife's family's—commemorative traditions. Some thirty years before his wife's death another striking cadaver monument had been placed in Childrey church, and in the same chapel. This was the brass

[25] TNA: PROB 11/23, fos. 42^{v}–44^{v}.

commemorating Joan Strangbon (d. 1477), his mother-in-law.[26] The brass was of singular design, and probably owed something to the tastes of the Lancastrian court.[27] Joan was shown lying on a tomb wrapped in a winding sheet and with her hands clasped (Fig. 75). Above her was an inscription of seven lines, and above this in turn a massive Trinity. Invocatory scrolls rose from Joan's figure, and shields were placed at the corners and sides. It is highly unlikely that this memorial was entirely without influence in shaping Fettiplace's own commemorative plans. His particular brass, showing figures of the deceased rising from their tombs, was of different design from Joan's. None the less, it belonged to the same macabre genre. There is every likelihood that family traditions of commemoration played a role in forming his taste alongside his own deeply felt piety.

Figure 75. Childrey (Berks.): Joan Strangbon (d. 1477)

[26] *VCH Berkshire*, iv. 276; C. E. Keyser, 'An Architectural Account of the Churches of Sparsholt and Childrey', *Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Archaeological Jnl.* 11 (1904–5), 81–107.

[27] Her father, Thomas Walrond, had served as a JP alongside John de la Pole, the duke of Suffolk's son, and John Norris, keeper of the jewels to Margaret of Anjou.

Baret, Fettiplace, and Morys all showed themselves to have been exceptionally concerned with preparation for the afterlife. Baret for one was familiar with the *Ars moriendi* literature; the others, even if not so intellectual in their tastes, at least knew something of the practice of preparing for one's end. All three showed an almost obsessive interest in securing intercessory prayer. Fettiplace even went to the lengths of arranging benefit for his soul from the rituals of Holy Week. It is tempting to speculate on the possibility of a connection between the intensity of these men's devotion and a taste for the macabre in commemoration. Conceivably, a leaning to the extreme in one area may have disposed them to a leaning to the extreme in another.

It is possible to identify another possible connection between testamentary piety and a taste for the macabre. All three men showed themselves in their wills as having a keen interest in works of charity. All three manifested a commitment to seeking out, assisting, and engaging with the poor: Fettiplace founded an almshouse, while Morys left money for prisoners and for the inmates of London hospitals. And all three insisted on the presence of poor bedesmen at their funerals. While well-to-do themselves, they yet appreciated their dependence on the least among men, those who were most pleasing to God. Their willingness to recognize the nakedness of the poor may have been a further factor in disposing them to contemplate the nakedness of their own corpses on their tombs. Funerary self-abasement, an expression of personal humiliation, may for them have been a first step to entry into paradise.

Yet, tempting as it is to establish such connections, it needs to be recognized that there is no easy solution to accounting for taste in the macabre. For every testator commemorated by a cadaver who was given to expressions of austere piety, there was another who was not. Isabella, countess of Warwick (d. 1439), asked to be shown naked on her tomb in Tewkesbury Abbey.[28] In every other respect, however, her will was utterly conventional, exhibiting no distinctive traits of piety at all. Equally, we can identify testators who displayed a leaning to austerity in their wills, yet who were commemorated by the most opulent of memorials. The clerk William Noion (d. 1405) asked to be buried without ceremony 'where God wills, but in the chancel at Haddenham if it should happen'.[29] He was to be commemorated by a particularly splendid canopied brass. Indeed, the point can be taken further. Contemporaries saw no contradiction between expressions of self-abasement and shows of splendour in commemoration. Austerity and opulence could, and did, go together. At St Paul's Cathedral Canon John Newcourt's epitaph (1485) referred contemptuously to his body; yet his memorial was conceived in the best traditions of St Paul's opulence.[30] On the brasses of two important lawyers—Thomas Rolf and John Martyn—there are lengthy epitaphs which dwell on the inevitability of death

[28] J. Ward (ed.), *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry, 1066–1500* (Manchester, 1995), 224.

[29] Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Arundel, i, fo. 224^{v}.

[30] For Newcourt's lost epitaph of 1485, see BL, Harley MS 3607, fo. 10^{r}. A drawing of his brass, from Dugdale, is reproduced in M. W. Norris (ed.), *Monumental Brasses: The Portfolio Plates of the Monumental Brass Society, 1894–1984* (Woodbridge, 1988), no. 228.

and the transience of earthly glory; yet both brasses are very splendid, Martyn's particularly so. Unlikely though it may seem, expressions of self-abasement could be accommodated in a variety of commemorative forms. There was no automatic correlation between humility and self-abasement and a taste for funerary austerity. While feelings of personal unworthiness may have created a disposition in favour of the macabre, they did no more than create a disposition. Anxiety was perfectly compatible with commemorative splendour.

OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES

The coexistence in monuments of qualities of splendour and austerity was hardly new in Western commemorative history; the two traditions had always sat alongside each other. The tension between them, indeed, formed a major theme in Western funerary art.

Opinion in late Antiquity had broadly favoured the practice of funerary austerity. St Augustine had been emphatic that magnificent funerary obsequies were of no worth. 'Obsequies conducted by the throng of his household for the rich nobleman are very magnificent, but more glorious in the sight of the Lord are those which the ministry of angels show to the ulcerated pauper, who take him not in a marble tomb, but gather him up in the bosom of Abraham.'[31] By the tenth and eleventh centuries, however, the gradual refinement of the doctrine of purgatory had led to an elaboration of both funerary ritual and the monuments associated with it. Through the construction of grand, eye-catching monuments the rich saw the chance to enhance their ability to procure the intercessory assistance of the faithful. This shift in thinking was registered, in the thirteenth century, in the writings of St Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274). In St Thomas's view, everything which had the effect of prompting onlookers, whether at the funeral or the tomb, to offer prayers for the deceased could be beneficial to the soul. Charitable bequests in the form of testamentary dispositions could also be of profit. Consequently, the rich were greatly advantaged over the poor provided they put their wealth to use wisely at death. As St Thomas put it, 'nothing hinders the rich from being in some respects better off than the poor, for instance as regards the expiation of their punishments'.[32] With this pronouncement, the stage was set for the elaborate funerals and magnificent tombs of the late Middle Ages.

Set against this line of thought, however, was a parallel emphasis on austerity which remained a constant sub-current, sometimes weak, sometimes bubbling to the surface, in the medieval commemorative tradition. The theme of mortality, integral to this counter-tradition, was picked up on tomb epitaphs in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Variations of the words 'O, food for worms, O, heap of

[31] P. M. King, 'The Cadaver Tomb in England: Novel Manifestation of an Old Idea', *CM* 5 (1990), 26–38, at 31. See also, P. M. King, 'Contexts of the Cadaver Tomb in Fifteenth-Century England' (University of York D.Phil. thesis, 1987). [32] Ibid.

dust! Why are you puffed up?'—words used by St Bernard—were employed on the epitaphs of Peter Damian (d. 1072) and Peter Comestor (d. 1179).[33] In England sentiments expressing the transience of earthly glory were inscribed on the epitaphs of Bishop Jocelyn de Bohun at Salisbury (Fig. 6) and John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, at Lewes; while the formula, later to become common, 'Quisquis eris qui transeris . . . sum quod eris fueramque quod es . . .', was employed on inscriptions at Watton (Yorks.) and Pamber (Hants).[34] In the late Middle Ages the connected themes of mortality and personal unworthiness were to become part of the stock-in-trade of a widely circulating moral and didactic literature. After 1348 the horrors of plague and sudden death probably added to the popular appeal of this genre of writing. In the half-century after the Black Death echoes of its austere fatalistic thought were picked up in moralizing inscriptions on monuments. At Canterbury, for example, the inscription on the Black Prince's tomb (post-1376), a variant of part of Peter Alphonsi's *Disciplina Clericalis*, dwelled on the contrast between the prince's estate in life and the condition to which he was now reduced.[35] On other monuments briefer epitaphs embodying much the same sentiments were employed. On Sir William de Etchingham's brass at Etchingham (Sussex), 1388, are the following lines:

> De terre fu fet et fourme et en terre fu retourne: William de Echinghm
> Estoie nome, dieu de malme eiez pitee: Et vous qi par ici passez pur
> Lalme de moy pur dieu priez . . .

Similar ideas were expressed in many other inscriptions which dwelled in one form or another on the same theme. These were on grand memorials, moreover, like Canon Newcourt's of 1485 at St Paul's, not on grim cadavers.

The related themes of mortality and the passing of earthly life accordingly formed well-established parts of the discourse of medieval monuments; indeed, they had featured in that discourse for as long as the practice of commemoration itself. Their origins lay in the teaching of the New Testament. What was new in the fifteenth century was that they were developed not only in textual discourse but in effigial sculpture too. The traditional effigy of the commemorated *au vif* was replaced by a likeness of the same as a grisly, even worm-eaten, cadaver. This remarkable development appears to have originated in some striking artistic developments of the late thirteenth century. Towards the end of the 1280s the practice began of representing the figure of Death in Apocalypse manuscripts as a decaying skeletal cadaver. The earliest representation of this kind appears to be in the Burckhardt-Wildt Apocalypse, painted in the north of England around 1290.[36] Here Death was shown as a cadaverous rider, cantering on horseback,

[33] K. Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1973), 25.

[34] For Warenne's now lost inscription of 1304, see ibid. 69.

[35] For the prince's inscription, see D. B. Tyson, 'The Epitaph of Edward, the Black Prince', *Medium Aevum*, 46 (1977), 98–104.

[36] J. Aberth, *From the Brink of the Apocalypse: Confronting Famine, War, Plague and Death in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 2001), 187–8.

with hollow eyes, fleshless nose, and sunken jaw. Such grisly realism was altogether new. Previously in Apocalypses, Death had been shown as a man, usually bearded, emerging from the jaws of hell in the form of a giant beast's head. In another Apocalypse manuscript of around this date, probably by the same artist, Death was again conceived in grisly terms. In yet another Apocalypse again, produced early the next century in Italy, Death was represented as a cadaver emerging from the jaws of hell without the usual hood. The idea of representing Death with such authentic gruesomeness quickly became widespread. The Burckhardt-Wildt image was probably the source for the image of Death as a skeleton on horseback brandishing a sword in an Apocalypse tapestry commissioned in France by Louis of Anjou, *c.*1377–80.[37] In the fourteenth century death imagery also presented itself in the form of paintings of the Three Living and the Three Dead, a subject that was to become fashionable in church mural paintings in the next century.

Why did a small group of illuminators in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries decide to depict Death as a corpse rather than, as in the past, as a living man? It can hardly have been because of a growing familiarity with mortality brought by the plague, as the change preceded the Black Death by some years. Nor can it have been the result of a reaction against personal self-indulgence and extravagance because no direct correlation is found with the rise in living standards.

One possible answer might be that such representation made a better accompaniment to the narrative context in which it appeared. The gruesome image brought a new realism to the subject, investing it with greater emotional drama and providing a more vivid visual counterpart to the text. A second and complementary reason, however, might be the influence of liturgical drama in producing a desire in artists and sculptors to create more powerful, lifelike images.[38] The visual intensity of liturgical dramas, which were originally conceived as ways of illustrating the words of preachers, had the effect of both stimulating an appetite for realism and encouraging the development of new imagery. The appearance in the late fourteenth century of the cadaver effigy may have been one remarkable by-product of this process of dramatization. It finds a natural context in the general late medieval tendency to express ideas in the language of symbol and allegory. A notable memorial which dwells extensively on the theme of the macabre—the brass of John Rudyng, archdeacon of Lincoln (d. 1481), at Biggleswade (Beds.)—includes a lengthy verse dialogue with the figure of Death, shown with a quiver of spears near the foot of the memorial.[39]

[37] J. Aberth, *From the Brink of the Apocalypse*, 189–90.

[38] Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol*, 32.

[39] Rudyng's brass, now mutilated, is illustrated in W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield, P. Whittemore, *The Monumental Brasses of Bedfordshire* (London, 1992), 13. The texts on the brass are reproduced and translated in A. C. Bouquet, *Church Brasses* (London, 1956), 148–9. In his will, made shortly before his death in 1481, Rudyng asked to be buried in the chancel of his prebendal church of Buckingham, where, he said, he had already commissioned a marble stone, i.e. most probably a brass ('sub lapide marmoreo ibidem pro me antea disposito'): Lincolnshire Record Office, Bishop's Register, XXII, fo. 60^{r}. Since there is no indication that the brass at Biggleswade has been removed from elsewhere, it is likely that Rudyng provided for multiple commemoration in the churches with

A more specific connection can be made with religious drama of a different kind—namely, the funerary ritual. The 'double-decker' monument, the most dramatic manifestation of the themes of the transience and vanity of earthly glory, appears to have originated in the use of effigies of high-status dead in funerals. The general intention was that these effigies should be created as lifelike as possible. Usually of wooden construction, they were clothed in the deceased's finery, and sometimes even dressed with some of his hair to strengthen the illusion of realism. The effigy was placed either on top of the coffin containing the corpse or on a wooden framework above the coffin. The first such effigy known to have been used in England was that of King Edward II at Gloucester in 1327.[40] The first extant 'double-decker' monument followed roughly a century later: that of Archbishop Chichele at Canterbury. At Chichele's own funeral in 1443 a wooden effigy of this kind is known to have been used—carried on the coffin, and dressed in full pontifical costume. Since Chichele commissioned his tomb well before his death, the tomb's design could hardly have been based directly on what happened at his obsequies. In general, however, the archbishop's taste is likely to have been shaped by what was becoming common practice in the funerals of the rich and the powerful. Around this time the 'double-decker' tomb of an aristocratic lady was illustrated in a morality poem inspired by the horrors of the plague, the *Disputacioun Betwyx the Body and Wormes*.[41] Gradually, a set of mental associations was being formed which was to find its most characteristic expression in the genre of shroud and cadaver monuments.

THE MEANING OF THE CADAVER MONUMENT

The gruesome realism of shroud and cadaver effigies can easily suggest that late medieval society was gripped by an all-pervading fear of mortality. The art of the earlier, central medieval period had been characterized by hope and optimism. When the Passion of Christ had been depicted, it had been treated with tenderness and sympathy; the impact of death had been softened. In the art of the late medieval centuries, by contrast, there was little room for display of sentiment. Death was made hideous and threatening. Death was seen as the great leveller. As Huizinga observed, the late medieval period appears one marked by singular melancholy and unhappiness.

Yet when the origins of the death imagery on late medieval monuments are examined, the contrast between the pre- and post-Black Death periods seems overdrawn. In less developed form, many of the ideas which found extreme

which he was associated or of which he was benefactor. Ralph Hamsterley is known to have done the same: above, 121.

[40] P. Lindley, 'Ritual, Regicide and Representation: The Murder of Edward II and the Origin of the Royal Funeral Effigy in England', in idem, *Gothic to Renaissance: Essays on Sculpture in England* (Stamford, 1995), 97–112.

[41] BL, Add MS 37049, fo. 32^{v}, reproduced in Binski, *Medieval Death*, 145.

expression in late medieval imagery can be found much further back. If a full understanding of the cadaver imagery of the late Middle Ages is to be attempted, the genesis of that imagery in a long-running discourse on human unworthiness needs to be addressed. The themes to which the grotesque monuments of the late Middle Ages gave expression were ones of timeless significance. They occupy too important a position in Christian thinking to be located historically in any one period.

The earliest known representation of a cadaver is on the tomb of Bruno (d. 1194), cellarer of Hildesheim Cathedral, at Hildesheim, Germany.[42] As so often on medieval monuments, the honouring of the commemorated is made part of a complex liturgical narrative. The monument is arranged vertically. In the lowest portion, Bruno's shrouded corpse is shown supported by two priests, representing the part of the funeral rite known as the 'elevatio corporis'; in the middle Bruno's soul is seen in the act of being carried heavenwards by two angels, while at the top there is a representation of Christ, with whom Bruno's soul will be united. As Panofsky showed, the imagery bears a striking resemblance to that in the twelfth-century narrative miniature of the death and transfiguration of Abbot Lambert of St-Bertin's, St-Omer.[43] At the foot of this drawing the deceased is shown lying on a bier while, above, the soul is borne aloft by angels, to be received by Christ with open arms at the top. A similar combination of motifs is used on the tomb of Archbishop Simone Salterelli (d. 1342) in Santa Caterina, Pisa, Italy. In the lower portion of the monument Salterelli's figure is shown lying in a death chamber, while above his naked soul is being carried up by angels. On all three monuments a clear linkage is established between death and resurrection. The message is clear, and takes the viewer to the heart of Christian doctrine. In death, through faith in the resurrection, the soul will be reunited with the Father.

The issue which provokes debate is whether this reading can be maintained in respect of late medieval cadaver monuments, on which the emphasis appears different. On the later monuments the iconography seems to stress the horror and finality of death rather than the hope thereafter of the resurrection. It is difficult to generalize on this issue because so much variation is found in representations of the dead body. In some cases the figure is wrapped in a shroud, indicating death, but is otherwise alert, with eyes open, and standing on a grassy mound. In others, a definite attempt is made to convey lifelessness: the eyes are depicted closed, as at Sheldwich (Kent) (Fig. 73), or the arms are folded over the breast as at Bawburgh (Norfolk), or they are stretched down to cover exposed genitals as at Aylsham (Norfolk). In other cases again the deceased is shown as a dessicated skeleton—sometimes, as at Oddington (Oxon.), being eaten by worms. Precisely because monuments of this sort were not mass-produced but were responses to *ad hoc* commissions, they offer almost infinite variety. It is hard to conceive that a single interpretation will fit the varied iconography of them all.

In at least some cases, however, there may be grounds for supposing that the optimistic interpretation suggested by the Continental monuments is to be

[42] Illustrated in Badham, 'Status and Salvation', 457.
[43] Panofsky, *Tomb Sculpture*, 60 and fig. 240.

favoured. On a brass such as that of John Symonds (d. 1512) and his wife at Cley (Norfolk), on which the figures are shown with their eyes open and in alert pose, it is reasonable to suppose that they are shown at the moment of resurrection. Vigorous and restored to life, they are caught at prayer in the act of preparing to cast aside their shrouds. It seems very likely that the brass of Robert Brampton and his wife at Brampton (Norfolk), *c.*1483, also captures its subjects at the moment of resurrection, in their case witnessing a vision of the Virgin. The two figures are shown erect, in the *orans* position, as they gaze in wonder at the vision of the Virgin and Child above, and speech scrolls issue from their mouths.[44] The message of these two memorials is positive, even triumphalist, in tone. They can be seen as articulating St Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 15: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'.

The symbolism of the cadaver monument finds its fullest and most elaborate expression in the incised slab to Ralph Woodford (d. 1498, but slab *c.*1485) at Ashby Folville (Leics.). This is one of the most striking and beautifully executed of all medieval incised slabs (Fig. 76). Woodford is shown skeletal and shrouded, flanked on each side by a tall cross with a scroll placed across it, and a greyhound and another scroll at his feet. The message of the scrolls on the crosses is admonitory: 'disce mori' ('take heed that you will die'). Of similar character is the message at the foot: 'Of erthe I am formed and made, To erthe I am turned all naked'. In its written discourse the monument takes the form of a *memento mori*. Yet the pose of the figure points to a different interpretation. Woodford is shown standing—lively and alert, and discarding his shroud. Still more significantly, above his head is the resurrection text from Job: 'Credo quod redemptor meus vivit . . .'. There can be no doubt that Woodford, like Brampton, is captured at the moment of his resurrection. The twin aspects of the experience of death are carefully balanced in the composition.

A similar combination of ideas is found on a shroud brass, *c.*1500, now represented by a despoiled indent, at Boston (Lincs.). In its main elements the brass was conceived on traditional lines. The figures, probably of a merchant and his wife, were shown in knotted shrouds, turned slightly towards each other, while below there was a foot inscription and a shield in each corner. The most remarkable feature of the brass was to be found in the scene above the figures. The souls of the two deceased, represented as heads, were shown being carried heavenwards on a winding sheet held by two angels. As at Ashby Folville, the theme of bodily mortality was balanced by that of the resurrection: in this case, very specifically the resurrection of the two persons commemorated.

On a couple of other monuments the theme of bodily resurrection is illustrated unequivocally and without ambivalence.[45] These are the brasses of William and

[44] S. Badham, 'Status and Salvation', *TMBS* 15 (1996), 413–65, at 458. A brass of similar design is that of Christopher Grantham and his wife, *c.*1520 at Wooburn (Bucks.); here the speech scrolls are addressed to the Trinity. The use of speech scrolls can only be made sense of if the deceased is assumed to be restored to life.

[45] N. Rogers, '"Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum": Images and Texts relating to the Resurrection of the Dead and the Last Judgement on English Brasses and Incised Slabs', in N. Morgan (ed.), *Prophecy, Apocalypse and the Day of Doom* (Donington, 2004), 343–55.

Figure 76. Ashby Folville (Leics.): Ralph Woodford (*c.*1485). Rubbing of incised slab

Elizabeth Fettiplace, 1516, at Childrey (Berks.) and Thomas Spring (d. 1486) and his wife Margaret at Lavenham (Suffolk). At Childrey, as we have seen, the two commemorated are shown in shrouds, rising from their tombs and casting aside the cover-lids as they do so (Fig. 74). The Springs' brass at Lavenham was conceived on the same lines, with the figures virtually raised from their tombs, their shrouds thrust back, and their hands lifted in awe. As at Brampton, there was once an image above the figures, unfortunately now lost. At Lavenham the resurrection is a resurrection of the whole family, with groups of boys and girls lined up behind the two parents.

The resurrection theme was developed most fully on monuments placed on the north side of chancels which were intended to be used as receptacles for the Easter Sepulchre. The large 'double-decker' monument of Richard Willoughby and his wife, 1466, at Wollaton (Notts.) provides an excellent example. The monument, similar to the duchess of Suffolk's at Ewelme (Fig. 70), consists of a big rectangular recess framing a tomb chest with conventional brass effigies above and a single cadaver, behind a grill, beneath. The imagery, as on the duchess's tomb, was to be understood in the context of Christian teaching of the resurrection. The grisly cadaver enclosed at the foot was a *memento mori*, a reminder of mortality, a warning to the beholder. The conventional brass figures of Willoughby and his wife referred to their bodily resurrection and redemption through Christ (Fig. 16). The angels bearing sheets, carved on the frieze along the top, symbolized the ascent of the souls of the deceased to heaven. The monument was a carefully integrated composition which was to be read from bottom to top, from earth to heaven. Quite possibly, the iconography was completed by painted resurrection imagery on the back panel, now lost. The position of Ralph Woodford's monument at Ashby Folville on the north side of the chancel suggests that it too was designed to receive the Easter Sepulchre.

There are grounds for believing, therefore, that in many cases the iconography on cadaver monuments played on the old and familiar theme of bodily resurrection and salvation of the soul through faith in Christ. This appears to have been the case even on some of the grisliest monuments of the time. On Abbot Wakeman's monument at Tewkesbury, *c*.1510 (the 'Wakeman cenotaph'), on which the body is shown being eaten by worms, the resurrection theme is hinted at by shields of the Passion on the sides reminding the onlooker of how Christ's sacrifice transcended the death of the body.[46] Monuments of the cadaver or *transi* type were a form of commemoration unique to the unsettled period between the late fourteenth century and the mid-sixteenth. It is easy to associate them with the grim mortality which was so dominant a feature of the demographic history of the period. Yet despite the apparent novelty of their imagery, a feature to be associated more with contemporary artistic tendencies, their message was largely traditional. It is true that their appeal was mainly to the ostentatiously (and often courtly) pious, and there was something modish and fashionable about them. If, as Binski has

[46] Lindley, 'The Later Medieval Monuments and Chantry Chapels' (2003), 180–2.

argued, they were in character anti-decorum, exposing the myths and silences of the formal monument, they none the less had much in common with more traditional tomb sculpture.[47] In many cases, as at Tewkesbury, the architectural surroundings of the cadaver were as grand as those which accompanied more traditional types of monument. Essentially the purpose of the *transi* was the customary one of the monument: to prompt the onlooker to offer intercessory prayer for the deceased. Interestingly, in many cases they are associated with 'Orate pro anima . . .' inscriptions. Where they departed from traditional conceptions of the monument was in their determination to shock the viewer. In this respect, their novelty created a less conventional and more complex relationship with those who looked on. The beholder was now invited not only to pray for the soul of the deceased but also to reflect on the fate of his or her own soul. Even this aspect, however, was not entirely novel. Since at least the twelfth century such admonitions to the viewer had been common in inscriptions. The most striking contribution of the cadaver monument to late medieval funerary art lay in the provision of a new set of visual motifs to accompany these traditional ideas. In this respect, the cadaver, though unconventional and emotive, reinforced rather than undermined the traditional monument in its construction of strategies for salvation.

[47] Binski, *Medieval Death*, 151.

14

Inscriptions

If monuments used the language of sign and symbol to communicate their message, they also drew on textual discourse. As early as the eighth century, inscriptions had featured on monuments in the churches of the highly literate Northumbrian monastic communities. By the late Middle Ages, there was scarcely a tomb or brass which was lacking an inscription or other text; indeed, in many cases the inscription was all that the monument consisted of. The widespread use of inscriptions in the sepulchral repertory raises important questions about their authorship and purpose, audience and reception. Inscriptions played an essential part in communicating the monument's message and in manipulating viewers' responses to it. Who composed inscriptions, and why? To whom were they addressed? How was their discourse constructed?

INSCRIPTIONS ON EARLY MONUMENTS

Inscribed text figured prominently on some of the earliest monuments to have come down to us. In Northumbria in the eighth century crosses and grave markers inscribed with personal names were a hallmark of the commemorative culture associated with the artistic and literary renaissance of that period. In cemeteries serving the former monastic communities of Whitby, Hartlepool, Monkwearmouth, and Lindisfarne large numbers of gravestones carrying names have come to light.[1] Some half-dozen such stones have been uncovered at the abbeys of Whitby and Hartlepool, and even more beneath York Minster. At Hackness (Yorks.), a church with Whitby connections, a remarkable cross, probably of eighth-century date, bears both runic and Latin inscriptions honouring a local abbess.[2] The range of verbal formulae employed on these modest memorials was limited. Typically, texts in Old English used wording on the lines of (in translation) 'in memory of . . .'. Texts in Latin more commonly took the form of 'pray for the soul of . . .'. A reused Roman inscribed stone at York read: 'Pray for the soul of Costavn.' Occasionally in Latin texts a variant of the 'Here lies' formula was used. One of the longer texts, at Monkwearmouth, read: 'Hic in

[1] E. Okasha, *Hand-List of Anglo-Saxon Non-Runic Inscriptions* (Cambridge, 1971), 76–9, 94–7, 101–2, 121–6, 131–5.

[2] See above, 14.

sepulchro requiescat corpore Herebericht prb (presbiter)'.[3] In their basic formulae these inscriptions strikingly anticipate those employed on monuments in the late Middle Ages.

The production of these inscribed texts may be regarded as one of the most remarkable aspects of funerary commemoration in the north of England in the early Middle Ages. Although the stones are concentrated in largest number in the monasteries where a strongly literate culture flourished, they are by no means confined to them. Examples are also found in rural parish churches at Dewsbury and Thornhill (Yorks.), Billingham and Birtley (Co. Durham), and Gainford (Northumberland).

In the south of England examples of early inscribed texts are fewer. A series of stones at Wareham (Dorset), probably to members of a British community, provide the most significant exceptions.[4] Some 80 per cent of early inscribed stones are to be found in broadly the area comprising the former kingdom of Northumbria.[5] This is a distribution pattern closely paralleled by that of Anglo-Saxon carved stones, some 72 per cent of which survive in the same area. In southern England much the biggest concentration of inscribed stones is to be found in Devon and Cornwall, where there are as many 79, mostly with runic texts, from the period *c*.400–*c*.1100.[6] Elsewhere in the southern counties inscribed texts only become even moderately common after *c*.1000.

A number of possible explanations may be offered for the striking concentration of pre-Conquest inscribed texts in the north. One is that the concentration is actually more apparent than real. It is at least conceivable that the distribution pattern was once more even, but that the extensive rebuilding of churches in the south has led to the destruction of many pre-Conquest examples there. Against this possibility, however, has to be set the absence of any evidence of reuse of early inscribed stones in later reconstructions, a practice common in the north. There are, in fact, powerful reasons for supposing that the existing pattern broadly reflects the original. Geologically, the north was far more highly favoured than the south. For stone to be inscribable and to resist erosion, it must be relatively hard and comparatively non-reactant with rain. Such stone exists in large quantities in the north, but is relatively rare in the south. Second, and perhaps more important, till the ninth century the northern kingdoms were culturally more advanced than the southern. The inscribed namestones which survive in such abundance in Durham and Yorkshire date from the period of greatest achievement of the Northumbrian cultural renaissance. It is no coincidence that the richest concentrations of stones are associated with monasteries at which a strong literate culture flourished. Jarrow, Hartlepool, and Monkwearmouth, all

[3] Okasha, *Hand-List of Anglo-Saxon Non-Runic Inscriptions*, 134, 101.

[4] J. Higgitt, 'The Inscriptions', in R. Cramp, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, VII: *South-West England* (Oxford, 2006), 65.

[5] Okasha, *Hand-List of Anglo-Saxon Non-Runic Inscriptions*, 4–5.

[6] E. Okasha, *Corpus of Early Christian Inscribed Stones of South-West Britain* (Leicester, 1993). The majority of the stones are pillar stones; it is hard to say how many of them are commemorative.

monastery sites which have yielded large numbers of stones, were major centres for the reading, copying, and illustration of religious texts. There were no monasteries of comparable importance in the south before the monastic revival at the end of the tenth century.

To the remarkable corpus of stones with inscribed text should be added those for which there is evidence of painted text. There are indications that painted text was once as extensively deployed on gravestones as inscribed. Among the stones uncovered in the excavations at York and Lincoln a number have retained fragments of polychrome paint on their surfaces.[7] The texts are likely to have taken the form of brief appeals for prayers for the deceased, as on comparable inscribed stones. On stones from which the pigment is altogether gone, the smoothed surface sometimes indicates that it was once applied. Painted inscriptions were probably as common on monuments in the pre-Conquest period as they were to become later in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Admittedly, that still leaves a large number of stones, chiefly horizontal grave markers, for which there is no evidence of painted or inscribed text at all. It is possible that in these cases the text was located on an accompanying vertical marker placed at right angles to the main stone. It is not inconceivable that the many anonymous stones decorated with interlace were once accompanied by markers of this kind.

In northern England the type of memorial stone or grave marker most commonly used between the seventh century and the ninth was the upright cross shaft or stele on which the text was laid horizontally in lines around the head. Many examples of such stones have survived at Hartlepool, York, Monkwearmouth, and other sites. The monument type probably had its origins in Continental traditions of commemoration. Not dissimilar rectangular grave markers with inscribed crosses and inscriptions were widely used in Italy in this period or earlier. Some 25 examples have survived at the abbey of San Vicenzo al Volturno, south of Rome.[8] It is likely that both the English and Italian types had their origin in a common source, probably a source in southern Italy.

In the tenth and eleventh centuries, however, this long-standing arrangement of text was abandoned in favour of an arrangement which placed the text around the perimeter. The earliest extant stone to indicate the new layout is a small fragment at Braunton (Devon), now almost effaced, which, to judge from its plant scroll decoration, may be of tenth-century date.[9] The first complete stone to use the layout is the tomb slab at Stratfield Mortimer (Berks.), which commemorates Æthelweard son of Cypping (Fig. 3). Here the inscription is deployed without accompanying sculptural decoration. With this remarkable and well-preserved monument, we witness the birth of the marginal inscription as it was later to be found on thirteenth- to fifteenth-century tomb chests and brasses.

[7] D. M. Hadley, *Death in Medieval England* (Stroud, 2001),136.

[8] J. Higgitt, 'The Non-Runic Inscriptions', in J. Lang, *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, III: *York and East Yorkshire* (Oxford, 1991), 44–7; J. Mitchell and J. L. Hansen (eds.), *San Vicenzo al Volturno*, 3: *The Finds from the 1980–86 Excavations* (2 vols., Spoleto, 2001), ii. 48, 50, 60–1.

[9] Higgitt, 'The Inscriptions', 67.

THE RETREAT FROM TEXTUALITY, 1066–1200

The rich textuality of Anglo-Saxon monuments is all the more remarkable in the light of the apparent reduction of such discourse after the Conquest. Surprisingly little inscribed text is found on the ubiquitous cross slabs which are so characteristic of funerary sculpture of the period 1066–1200. It cannot be argued that, as in the late Saxon period, texts were inscribed on accompanying vertical markers because vertical stones went out of fashion after the Conquest. With the growth of intramural burial the cross slab by itself now constituted the fabric of the memorial. The retreat from textuality is characteristic of church decoration more generally. After 1100 textual discourse, such as that on the transept arch at Breamore (Hants) or on the sundial at Kirkdale (Yorks.), both later-eleventh century, disappears in favour of abstract sculptural decoration or no decoration at all. The phenomenon might be related to a parallel phenomenon which has been noticed—a reduction in the use of funerary monuments altogether as patrons sought immortality instead in church building.[10]

Yet the argument for textual retreat should not be pressed too far. Use of inscriptions did not disappear altogether. In monasteries it was conventional to adorn the tombs of founders, benefactors, and heads of houses with epitaphs of a self-consciously literary turn. These texts were compositions of varying quality drafted by monks schooled in the classical tradition. One of the more accomplished examples was to be found on the tomb slab of William de Warenne at St Pancras Priory, Lewes, which he founded:

Hic Villelme Comes locus est laudis tibi fomes
Huius fundator et largus sedis amator
Iste tuum funus decorate placuit quia munus
Pauperibus Christi quod prompta mente dedisti
Ille tuos cineres servat Pancratius haeres
Sanctorum castris qui sociabit in astris
Optime Pancrati fer opem te glorificanti
Daque poli sedem talem tibiqui dedit aedem.[11]

[10] A. N. McClain, 'Patronage, Power and Identity' (Univ. of York Ph.D. thesis, 2006).

[11] The tomb slab is now lost, but the text was recorded by Orderic Vitalis (Anderson, '"Uxor Mea": The First Wife of the First William de Warenne', 127). It may be translated as:

Earl William in this place your fame is kindled
You built this house and were its generous friend
This was a gift freely and gladly given
To the poor of Christ; it honours now your urn.
The saint himself, Pancras, who guards your ashes
Will raise you to the mansions of the blessed,
Saint Pancras give, we pray, a seat in heaven
To him who for your glory gave this house.

Warenne's wife's epitaph on a neighbouring tomb, extant in St John's Southover, Lewes (Fig. 7), commented on her distinguished lineage:

> Stirps Gundrada ducum decus evi[ ] nobile germen
> Intulit ecclesiis Anglorum balsama morum
> Martir [ ]
> Fuit miseris fuit ex pietate Maria
> Pars obiit Marthe superest pars Magne Marie
> O pie Pancrati tes[ ] is et equi
> Te facit herede tu Clemens suscipf (sic) matrem
> Sexta Kalendarum Junii lux obvia carnis
> Iffregit alabastr . . .[12]

The textuality of this minority of high-status tombs, however, stands in sharp contrast to the anonymity of the majority. By comparison with the centuries before 1066, after the Conquest inscribed texts on monuments are of remarkable rarity.

Yet the suggestion has been made that to concentrate on inscribed text on tombs is to gain only a partial view of the textual discourse they once carried. Allowance should be made too for the possibility of painted text, in most cases now lost.[13] Short epitaphs identifying the deceased and appealing for prayers, it is argued, would have formed part of the normal polychrome decoration on tombs. In a mere handful of cases, mostly of later date, has any of this decoration survived. At Allensmore (Heref.) areas of colour-filled inlay, remarkably, survive in excellent condition on the slab of Sir Andrew Herley and his wife. Antiquarian sources show that there were once painted inscriptions on the surrounds of tombs, now lost, at Meaux Abbey (Yorks.).[14] In most cases, however, and almost invariably on floor monuments, such painted text is indecipherable or no longer extant. Just occasionally its presence may be inferred from spaces prepared for it on or near the edge of the slab. At Melmerby (Yorks.) a fifteenth-century cross slab has a blank marginal strip around three sides which bore painted text since worn away. Even on

[12] The text, lost in places, is taken from the extant slab: ibid. 127. The date of the slab is *c*.1180. The surviving lines may be translated:

> Gundrada, of ducal stock, the ornament of her age, an offshoot of the nobility,
> Brought to the English churches the soothing ointment of her goodness
> Martyr . . .
> Was. To the poor she was a Mary in her tender ways
> The part of her that was like Martha died; the finer part that was like Mary lives
> O holy Pancras . . . and justice.
> She makes you her heir; you in your mercy acknowledge your mother
> On 27 May the light, after a hostile encounter with the flesh
> Shattered the alabaster . . .

[13] S. Badham, '"A new feire peynted stone": Medieval English Incised Slabs?', *CM* 19 (2004), 26–7.

[14] J. Luxford, '"Thys ys to remembre": Thomas Anlaby's Illustrations of Lost Medieval Tombs', *CM* 20 (2005), 31–9.

slabs where there is no obvious place for an epitaph round the edge, text could have been fitted into other positions on the surface. A fine late thirteenth-century slab in Hereford Cathedral has a blank panel marked out at the top (Fig. 4). On slabs at St Oswald's, Durham, and Kirkoswald (Northumberland) the text was probably accommodated on each side of the cross shaft. On a slab at St Peter's, Castle Carrock, the text was fitted into the spaces around the cross head. By the end of the twelfth century, the argument runs, it is unlikely that there were many monuments without textual discourse. When the need for prayer was so urgent, there was bound to be a means by which those for whom those prayers were sought could be identified.

Persuasive as this argument is, however, there are objections which can be raised on the other side. In the first place, on many slabs there is no obvious space on which polychrome text could have been applied. A couple of cross slabs now placed alongside each other at Carlby (Lincs.) illustrate the point. On the later of the two, of fourteenth- or fifteenth-century date, there is an inscription, while on the other, and earlier, there is not; nor is there any indication of where one could have been accommodated. Alongside this negative evidence is the telling witness of contemporaries. In the mid-fifteenth-century account of the monuments in St Albans Abbey it is noted that a number of tomb slabs were lacking inscriptions. 'Below John Howton's tomb', the author writes, 'there are three simple stones with no epitaph for memory.' Or again: 'on the northern side of the church lies Dom Hugh Langley under a stone unadorned with an epitaph'. In a final example: 'near the chapter house was buried John Heyworth under a plain stone without any inlaid inscription'.[15] In the light of this evidence it can hardly be doubted that there were at least some twelfth- and thirteenth-century tomb slabs which lacked inscriptions. Yet in the monastery of St Albans at least it was known exactly whom those tomb slabs commemorated.

How, then, was memory of identity preserved? In an ancient house like St Albans, knowledge of who was buried in the most important tombs would have been carried in the collective memory of the community. In many institutions the resource of memory would have been reinforced by the record of the bede roll or *liber memorialis*. In these sometimes massive compilations were preserved the names of benefactors who were honoured with burial in the church. It was most probably in the small parish churches, where structured institutional memory was lacking, that the need for tomb inscriptions was greatest. Indeed, it may well have been in these settings that the idea of using inscriptions on any scale first arose. Whether or not this was the case, there are none the less indications that some monuments still lacked them. What suggests this is that later, when memory was fading, identification was being supplied by other means. At Aldworth (Berks.), for example, according to Richard Symonds in the 1640s, accompanying the de la Beche monuments there was 'a table fairly written in parchment of all the names of the family of de la Beche': which the earl of Leicester, however, took down to show his son and never returned.[16] Such 'tabulae', hung from pillars for the benefit

[15] *Annales Monasterii Sancti Albani*, i. 437, 440, 441.

[16] BL, Harley MS 965, fo. 253^{r}.

of visitors, are known to have been a feature of churches, particularly monastic churches, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[17] William Worcester used them when he compiled the church notes which became his *Itineraries*. It is possible that Gervase Holles was referring to a 'tabula' when he wrote that at Burton Pedwardine (Lincs.) there was a manuscript history devoted to the Pedwardine family which recorded their burial places in the church.[18] If monuments were lacking in epitaphs, later generations found means of preserving information about identity when memories were failing, or failed altogether.

The question of how the identity of the person commemorated was preserved is intimately related to that of why the retreat from text occurred in the first place. Part of the answer to this second question is that, in the case of secular effigies at least, text had in many ways been rendered redundant. By the mid-twelfth century a new and more effective means had been found of proclaiming personal identity in the symbolic language of heraldry. Heraldry, the systematic deployment of hereditary devices on a shield, was an innovation of the early twelfth century. Its origins were to be found in the repertory of strange and exotic devices which knights had displayed on their banners from the time of the First Crusade.[19] Once the use of these devices had been regulated and refined, and particular ensigns were accepted as personal to their owners, a language of visual symbolism was available which could be used both to assist identification and to attest the owner's high birth. By the 1140s a generally recognized set of charges and tinctures had emerged, which allowed families to adopt devices distinctive to themselves and to display these on shields in a variety of military and civilian settings. It seems likely that heraldic devices were displayed on tombs by no later than the closing decades of the twelfth century. In a society in which signs could be recognized more easily than words, an heraldic device probably conveyed the message of identity to a wider audience and with more immediate effect than an epitaph. A device had the further attraction of enabling all-important marital connections to be displayed through means such as dimidiation and, later, impaling. On monuments on which heraldry was displayed alongside a praying effigy, the twin messages of status and the deceased's need for intercession were communicated so effectively there was little need for other discourse. In such circumstances, on secular monuments heraldry had rendered the written word virtually redundant.

THE REAPPEARANCE OF TEXT

By the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the retreat from textual discourse had run its course, and inscriptions were once again featuring regularly in the funerary repertory. By 1300 probably almost every monument was decorated with some inscribed or painted text. How and why had the change come about?

[17] A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, II, c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London, 1982), 495.

[18] *Lincs. Church Notes*, 211.

[19] D. Crouch, *The Image of the Aristocracy in Britain, 1000–1300* (London, 1992), 220–37.

At one level, the shift can be explained very simply in terms of the spread of literacy. In the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a big expansion had occurred in the number of those capable of making sense of a written text. Not only was a command of Latin and French by now more widespread among the middle and lower ranks of the clergy; most of the nobility and upper gentry were mastering the art of reading basic administrative documents and perhaps even of appreciating simple liturgical texts. By the late thirteenth century a brief funerary epitaph could be understood by many of the lay patron class as well as by the clerks to whom it was principally directed.

There were other, more specific, factors at work too. One of the most important was the growing popularity of parish church burial. By the middle of the thirteenth century members of the knightly class, newly alert to the territorial dimension to their lordship, were turning increasingly to burial in the parish church and away from the monasteries in which their ancestors had been buried. There was one major objection, however, to burial in the parish church: its lack of institutional memory. The rapid turnover of incumbents, contrasting with the continuity of personnel in monasteries, meant that recollection of those buried in the church would soon be forgotten. If a monument in a parish church was to be of any value as a bearer of memory, it was essential that it had some means of identification. So long as burials were relatively few, the presence of a shield of arms or other identifier might suffice. Once the number of burials grew larger, however, something more specific and personal would be needed. With the growing popularity of parish church burial, the need for inscriptions inevitably became greater.

A second factor which encouraged the use of inscriptions was the practice of offering pardons for intercession.[20] By the later twelfth century the Church was regularly authorizing the issue of pardons remitting the pains of purgatory in return for the performance of good works—commonly, the offer of prayers for the dead. In 1216 the canons of the third Lateran Council had laid down that pardons of up to a maximum of forty days could be issued by local diocesan bishops. By the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries it had become common for pardons of that duration or longer to be offered on monuments. On Joan de Cobham's brass at Cobham (Kent), *c*.1300, a pardon of forty days was offered to those praying for the deceased, while at Edvin Ralph (Heref.) one of as much as sixty days was offered to those interceding for Matilda de Eddefen. Exceptionally, on Prior William de Basing's monument at Winchester a pardon of three years and fifty days was offered, presumably on papal authority. As the practice of offering pardons for intercession spread, so too did the need to provide epitaphs detailing the offers and identifying those for whom the intercession was to be made.

[20] On this subject, see G. Marshall, 'The Church of Edvin Ralph and some Notes on Pardon Monuments', *Trans. Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* (1924–6), 40–55.

THE CHARACTER AND FUNCTION OF INSCRIPTIONS

The main purpose of medieval epitaphs, as of the monuments to which they belonged, was to secure intercession for the deceased. This was the reason for the familiar opening formula so often employed: 'Orate (or ora) pro anima . . . ', 'pray for the soul of . . . '. In every inscription, however complex, there were two or three key elements: the identity of the deceased; the appeal for intercessory prayer; and, later, the date of the deceased's death.

A good example of a thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century inscription is provided by that on a knightly brass (inlays lost) at Aston Rowant (Oxon.):[21]

Lalme receive Ihesu Crist Vous qe par ici passetz
Pur lalme Sire Hughe le Blount prietz
Le corps de qi ici gist
Lalme recive Ihesu Crist

In this case, the naming of the deceased was combined with an appeal for intercessory prayer and a plea for Christ's mercy. Sometimes the approach was shorter and more direct. At Long Crichel (Dorset) an inscription of slightly later date (*c*.1360) reads simply:

Johan Govys gist icy
Dieu de lalme eyt mercy

The plea for prayer here was implicit.

Before the mid-fourteenth century it was rare for the date of death to be given on inscriptions. This was simply because such information was of no particular relevance to the securing of intercession. The position changed, however, once the annual marking of the anniversary became common. It was important for relatives of the deceased to be reminded of the date of death so that they knew when to gather around the tomb to re-create the funeral. By the third quarter of the fourteenth century the date of death was almost invariably included on tomb epitaphs. Once marking of the anniversary became an established liturgical event, so correspondingly offers of pardon tended to become less common. However, they did not die out altogether. In the fifteenth century they sometimes featured on inscriptions to members of guilds which had secured indulgences.[22] In the early sixteenth century they enjoyed something of a revival, apparently in response to a new intensity of concern about the safety of the soul.

[21] For early inscriptions, see J. Bertram, 'Medieval Inscriptions in Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*, 68 (2003), 27–53.

[22] An example is the inscription at Boston to Richard Frere (d. 1424), a member of the Guild of the Blessed Virgin: *Lincs. Church Notes*, 154.

In the three hundred years from the late twelfth century to the early sixteenth, the essential character of the inscription changed remarkably little. The three key elements remained the deceased's name, his or her date of death, and an appeal for prayers. In compositional terms, changes were rung on the stock formulae 'Here lies . . .' ('Hic iacet . . .', 'Ici gist . . .') or 'Pray for the soul of . . .' ('Orate pro anima . . .', 'Priez pur . . .'). By the early fourteenth century 'Hic iacet . . .' had become the most popular formula, probably as a result of intra-mural burial. By the early sixteenth century, however, 'Orate pro anima . . .' or its English equivalent 'Of your charity pray for . . .' had taken over. Almost certainly, this was because of the widespread employment of the formula in other media, notably stained glass, to which brass design was closely related.[23]

Within this structure of continuity, however, there was a trend for inscriptions to become longer and more complex. This is more immediately apparent on brasses than on sculpted monuments because the flat surface of the brass afforded greater space for elaboration of the text. The increase in the discursive content related to both aspects of the monument's function. Appeals for intercession became longer and more insistent while, at the same time, more information was included on the deceased's worldly standing and his or her marital connections.

The first of these developments—the enrichment of the intercessory discourse—found expression in more detailed recording of the deceased's good works. Mention was now more commonly made of generous deeds which those offering intercession could place before the Almighty in their prayers. On gentry monuments it became common to mention the deceased's rebuilding, extending, or embellishing of church fabrics. At Etchingham (Sussex) the lord of the manor Sir William de Etchingham (d. 1389) was said to have 'rebuilt (Etchingham) church completely anew in honour of God, the Virgin Mary and St Nicholas'. At Holme next the Sea (Norfolk) Henry Nottingham and his wife were honoured as builders of the 'steeple and quire' of Holme church. At Great Linford (Bucks.) Roger Hunt was credited with wholly repaving the church floor. After 1400, good works were increasingly recorded on monuments of the burgess and merchant class. On a slab in Hereford Cathedral Andrew Jones was honoured for rebuilding and repaving the charnel house, which had been derelict.[24] On clergy memorials, repairs to the chancel, a clerical responsibility, were often singled out for mention. At Compton Valence (Dorset) Thomas Maldon, the rector, *c.*1440, was credited with 'newly building the chancel'. At Emberton (Bucks.), 1410, another rector, John Morden, was honoured for providing liturgical books and ornaments for his own and two neighbouring churches. At Canterbury, Prior Chillendon, one of the medieval cathedral priory's most munificent rulers, was honoured for his initiative

[23] The 'pray for . . .' formula accompanied donor figures. It was also sometimes employed on woodwork.

[24] The alabaster slab was evidently laid at the time of the charnel house work as it records this date, but not that of Jones's death. The slab is illustrated in *TMBS* 17 (2004), 176.

in rebuilding the nave and his commitment to safeguarding the cathedral priory's privileges.[25]

By the early fifteenth century the foundation of chantries and charities was also recorded. This was not only for the obvious reason—these initiatives were meritorious acts which could be placed before the Almighty; it was also for the very practical need to ensure their continuance. At Coningsby (Lincs.) John Croxby's assignment of £20 in rents to support a charity for the villagers was recorded on an inscription on the nave wall, while at Rothley (Leics.) the part of Bartholomew Kingston's will relating to the establishment of an obit in the church was reproduced *in extenso* on his tomb epitaph.[26] On some occasions inscriptions were commissioned very specifically to record chantry foundations which were in danger of being forgotten. In *c*.1420 an inscription was placed at Hellesdon (Norfolk) to the memory of the founders of a chantry established forty years before, presumably for fear of their memory fading.[27]

If recollection of the deceased's good works had the effect of making inscriptions longer, so too did the growing preoccupation with offices, positions, and connections. The reason for including such details was to answer the questions: what sort of person was buried here? And of what quality or degree was he? By the fifteenth century, monuments played a key role in attesting the standing of those of power and influence in a locality. Patrons who commissioned monuments accordingly took care to ensure that details relevant to status were accorded due prominence.

Details of rank, office, and marital and magnate connections were the stock-in-trade of the late medieval tomb epitaph. Sometimes testators spelled out very precisely in their wills what details were to be recorded. In 1526 the Cheshire knight Sir Ralph Egerton prescribed inclusion of his office of standard bearer to the king; and when his monument was placed in Bunbury church two years later, the office was duly recorded.[28] By the fifteenth century a person's rank or station—knight, esquire, or, in the case of townsmen, citizen—was invariably given after his name. Knights of superior rank—barons, bannerets, and lords of parliament—were always recognized as such, as the Cobhams were on their memorials at Cobham and Lingfield. Esquires and gentlemen were always carefully identified. Major offices and appointments held by the deceased were given honourable mention. At Tong (Salop) Sir William Vernon was described as constable of England, and

[25] For Chillendon's inscription, now lost, see J. Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (London, 1631), 236.

[26] *Lincs. Church Notes*, 137; F. Greenhill, *The Incised Slabs of Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicester, 1958), 151–2.

[27] For 'endowment tablets' on the continent, see P. Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death* (London, 1981), 277–81.

[28] J. P. Rylands and F. C. Beazley, 'The Monuments at Bunbury Church, Cheshire', *Trans. Historical Soc. of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 69 (1917), 109. A contemporary of Egerton's, Sir Richard Nanfan, asked for a tomb with an inscription giving 'all suche offices as I have had and composed in this worlde': Cockerham, *Continuity and Change*, 20 n.

Figure 77. Dodford (Northants): Sir John Cressy (d. 1445)

at Bossall (Yorks.) Robert Constable esquire, chancellor of Durham. At Dodford (Northants) Sir John Cressy's offices in English-occupied France were all identified by name (Fig. 77). In some cases the holding of office in local government was singled out for mention. At Addington (Kent) William Snaith (d. 1409) was recorded as serving as sheriff of Kent, and at Stratford (Middx.) Thomas Beaufitz as justice of the peace and deputy coroner of London.[29] In the case of townsmen, the holding of mayoral or aldermanic office, like social rank for the gentry, was mentioned. On a brass at St Peter le Bailey, Oxford, William de Laighburgh was said to have been mayor of Oxford at the time of Richard II's coronation, while on another Oxford brass the otherwise obscure John Boswell was honoured as 'senior beadle of the Faculty of Arts of the University'.[30] The contemporary obsession with the recording of office-holding was no less evident on tombs of the clergy. Cathedral dignitaries took care to list all the major offices they held, and wealthy pluralists the collections of prebends they had accumulated. If secular appointments

[29] For Beaufitz's lost brass, see *Middlesex Pedigrees*, ed. G. J. Armytage (Harleian Soc. 61, 1914), 134.

[30] J. Bertram, 'The Lost Brasses of Oxford', *TMBS* 11 (1969–75), 340, 366. The mayor of Oxford had the privilege of presenting a cup to the king at his coronation.

were held, these were thrown in. At Flamstead (Herts.) John Oudeby was said to have been Warwick chamberlain of the exchequer as well as rector of Flamstead and canon of Warwick.

On gentry monuments magnate affiliation, scarcely inferior to office-holding as a source of status, was mentioned wherever possible. At Stopham (Sussex) the service of three generations of the Bartelot family to the earls of Arundel was celebrated on their epitaphs. John Bartelot, founder of the dynasty, was described on his brass as treasurer of the guesthouse to Earl Thomas; his son was described as a counsellor ('consul prudens'), and his son in turn as marshal. At Emscote (War.) the equivalent service of generations of the Hugford family to their patrons, the earls of Warwick, was likewise celebrated on their epitaphs.[31] At Berkhamsted (Herts.) Robert Incent was proudly described as a 'gentleman servant' to Cecily, duchess of York, 'mother unto the worthy kyng Edward the IIII and Rychard the thyrde'. Something of the greatness of these well-born patrons rubbed off onto their less-well-born hangers-on. In late medieval England gentility could be acquired as well as inherited.

To the details of status and office were added, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, details of family and, in particular, marital connections. On a monument to a married couple, if the wife's family was of superior standing to the husband's, then details of the wife's parentage would be given. Thus on the brass to Baldwin Porter and his wife Jane at Berkswell (War.), 1506, Jane was carefully identified as the 'eldest syster of Thomas Litleton of Frankly knyght and Justice of the Common Plees'. In 1497, on the brass which Gerard Danet placed to the memory of his wife Anne at Weston under Wetherley (War.), Anne was described as 'daughter and oon of the heires of John Huggefford, lorde of Edmondscot, Wolfricheston, N Merston, Wapenbury, Wolstorp & Eythorp in the Countyes of Warr' & Leycest' '.[32] Given the lustre which she brought to the Danets, Anne's parentage was deemed well deserving of celebration on her epitaph.

If the tendency of epitaphs was to grow longer in the late Middle Ages, the same can be said of the textual discourse on monuments as a whole. On some of the grander monuments of the period the inscription formed only one part of a rich and spreading discourse which embraced subsidiary inscriptions, invocatory scrolls, and dialogues with the figures of patron saints.[33] Typically these subsidiary texts were liturgical in nature, prompted by the monument's function as a spur to intercession. The overwhelming majority were drawn from the Office of the Dead—the so-called Placebo and Dirige—which would have been familiar to all

[31] W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (2nd edn., London, 1730), i. 879.

[32] For these examples, BL, Harley MS 3607, fos. 22^{r}, 24^{r}.

[33] Scrolls enter the repertory at the end of the 13th cent. The two earliest examples are probably those on the monument of Muriel Fitzalan, *c*.1290, at Bedale (Yorks., NR), and accompanying a small civilian figure at Britford (Wilts.). On a 14th-cent. cross composition from Hawkridge (Som.), now in Exeter Museum, scrolls are placed across the figures and stem: B. F. Cresswell, 'Sepulchral Slabs with Crosses in Devon Churches', *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries*, 10 (1918–19), 65–7.

devout patrons from books of hours.[34] The 'Miserere . . . ' psalm, which featured at Lauds of the dead, was represented on brasses at St Aldate's and New College, Oxford, 1427 and 1441, and Aston Rowant (Oxon.). 'Timor mortis conturbat me', the response to the seventh lesson of Matins, was found at Northleach (Glos.). The famous text from Job 19, 'Credo quod Redemptor meus vivit . . . ', appears, usually in shortened form, on a number of clerical brasses, notably that of Dean William Prestwick (d. 1436) at Warbleton (Sussex), where it is scrolled down the orphreys of the cope (Fig. 14). On the brass, now lost, of Bishop Walter Skirlaw (d. 1408) in Durham Cathedral it was inscribed on the deceased's breast. The enrichment of the intercessory discourse on monuments went hand in hand with the enrichment of the intercessory discourse in churches more generally. In the late Middle Ages appeals for prayer were spread across stained glass windows, nave roofs, and rood screens; they were inscribed on fonts and font covers, external parapets and churchyard crosses.[35] At every point, the onlooker was reminded of the dependency on each other of the living and the dead.

THE AUDIENCE OF INSCRIPTIONS

Appeals for prayer implied the existence of an audience. At whom was the discourse of intercession directed? Was it just the priest? Or was a wider, partly lay, audience intended?

In the case of pre-Conquest England it is normally assumed that the audience was almost entirely clerical. This is because it is also assumed that only the clergy could read. These two connected beliefs may well be true, but they are not necessarily so. It is worth looking at the evidence for audience in pre-Conquest England in a little more detail.

The production of a monument—specifically a monument with inscribed text—in the pre-Conquest period typically required the collaboration of three people. These were the patron or commissioner; the person who composed the inscription; and the sculptor who cut it.[36] The patron, if a layman, may perhaps have been able to read minimally: conceivably he could have picked out his name. However, it is highly unlikely that he could write. If the sculptor is assumed to have copied the text given to him without understanding it, then only one of the three involved—the person who composed the epitaph—actually needed to be literate. The production of an inscribed text did not necessarily presuppose a high level of literacy in the community.

But if production could be achieved in a society with low literacy, does it follow that the audience would also have been small? It is tempting to suppose that this

[34] J. Bertram, 'Inscriptions on Late Medieval Brasses and Monuments', in J. Higgitt, K. Forsyth, D. N. Parsons (eds.), *Roman, Runes and Ogham: Medieval Inscriptions in the Insular World and on the Continent* (Donington, 2001), 190–200.

[35] See above, 138–41.

[36] E. Okasha, 'The Commissioners, Makers and Owners of Anglo-Saxon Inscriptions', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, 7 (1994), 71–7.

was the case. Yet on the other side should be set the fact that patrons anticipated the message on their stones being received and understood by beholders. They did not rely exclusively on the language of sign and symbol; they envisaged the existence of an audience which would understand the written information and in some way act on it. In most cases the action for which they were looking was the offer of prayers for the soul. If the monument was sited in a monastic cemetery, in the heart of a highly literate community, it could be assumed that this action would generally follow. In the case of a monument set in the cemetery of a remote parish church, however, no such assumption could be made. Not only was the literacy—or, at least, Latin literacy—of the local clerk open to question; the fact that the stone was extra mural makes it doubtful if the priest would even have taken much notice of it.

Elizabeth Okasha has attempted to address these difficulties by arguing that two audiences were intended—one earthly and the other heavenly; and that it was the heavenly audience, composed of God and the saints, which was expected to be literate.[37] This notion of a divine audience finds support in the texts of some inscriptions which address God directly. A stone now in Ely Cathedral, for example, has a text in Latin reading (in translation): 'O Lord, grant your light and peace to Ovin. Amen.' At Falstone (Northumberland) an inscription which has the same text in runic and non-runic script can be seen as addressing both of Okasha's audiences—the one heavenly and literate, the other earthbound and illiterate, or literate only in runic.

Okasha's argument has the merit of making sense of that highly distinctive group of inscriptions which can be seen as operating at two levels. A fair number of texts, however, seem unambiguously to address only one audience—the earthly. Their message is clear and unambiguous. They challenge the onlooker with a request for intercessory prayer—'ora pro . . . '. How are these inscriptions to be interpreted? In the case of monuments placed in monasteries, there is no problem: the message would have been understood immediately by the monks. By the tenth and eleventh centuries, however, many—perhaps the majority—of gravestones were laid not in monasteries, but in cemeteries attached to parish churches. In these cases, it is by no means clear who, if anyone, could have made sense of the text. The fact that late Saxon inscriptions are often in the vernacular rather than Latin suggests that patrons were not entirely confident of Latin being understood. It is possible that the main audience was still largely clerical, with the clerk acting as interpreter to those who could not read but would be expected to pray. However, a quite different possibility should at least be considered: that there was a minority of layfolk who could read the text for themselves. In a society in which, by the tenth century, written instruments were regularly used in government such a notion should not be dismissed as fanciful. It is worth considering in this context the inscription on the tombstone of Æthelweard son of Cypping at Stratfield Mortimer (Berks.) (Fig. 3). Remarkably, this inscription of *c.*1060 is almost wholly secular in its

[37] E. Okasha, 'Literacy in Anglo-Saxon England: The Evidence from Inscriptions', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, 8 (1995), 69–74.

content. While implicitly seeking prayer for the deceased, its principal concern is with matters of family and descent. Its function was public, and its intended audience as much lay as clerical. It is a product of the same culture as the donor inscriptions sometimes placed above church doors and windows which likewise appear to have had public status. Quite possibly, already by the late Saxon era inscriptions were reaching a wider audience than that represented by the highly literate communities of 400 years before.[38]

If the audience for early medieval inscriptions was therefore mainly clerical, while embracing a small lay element, the signs are that in the post-Conquest period the lay element grew larger. By a century or two after the Conquest, the ability to make sense of a functional text was one becoming more widely disseminated among the nobility and gentry.[39] As a result, it became possible, perhaps for the first time, to extend appeals for prayer to a wider circle in the expectation that they would be understood. This change is reflected in thirteenth-century inscriptions in the fashion for texts with an opening appeal to passers-by. We have seen in the case of the inscription at Aston Rowant that by *c*.1300 it was quite common for the opening formula to read: 'Those who pass by pray for . . . '. If the 'passer-by' formula became something of a cliché in the thirteenth century, it was not one entirely without significance. The appearance of this address can be connected with the other main development in inscriptions of the period: the offer of pardons for intercession.[40] Pardon texts, as we have seen, featured with some regularity on inscriptions of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The mere fact of the pardon being offered implies the existence of a significant lay audience, for it would hardly have been necessary to appeal to the priest's good nature in this way. Through the incentive of an easing of the pains of purgatory, intercession was sought specifically from lay onlookers.

Yet despite the importance of these developments, it is likely that the biggest expansion in the lay audience of inscriptions came only at the end of the Middle Ages. It was only after *c*.1350 that intra-mural lay burials spread out from the eastern parts of the church to the ritually less important parts of the building. By the post-Black Death period most of the immediately attractive burial places close to, or within sight of, an altar had been used up. Burials, as a result, came to be made in the more 'public' parts of the church: along the centre aisle of the nave, down the side aisles, by the walls, even in the porch. This was a development with major implications for the intended audience of inscriptions. Burials in the more public parts of the church were rarely within direct sight of the priest celebrating Mass at an altar. Accordingly, it was not so much to the priest that appeals for intercession were now directed; rather it was to the larger congregation of the faithful in the

[38] It is worth recalling in this connection that at the end of the 10th cent. another Æthelweard, an ealdorman in Wessex, wrote a Latin version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. The Latin is not good, but it is remarkable that the work was written at all: *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. A. Campbell (Oxford, 1962).

[39] M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307* (London, 1979), 258–65.

[40] See above, 340.

nave. Loss in the quality of intercessory prayer was to be compensated for, at least to a degree, by an increase in its quantity. It is to this background that we find testators taking a keener interest in having their epitaphs placed in positions where they would be seen. In 1376 the Black Prince requested that 'on our tomb [at Canterbury] an inscription be put where it can clearly be seen and read'; and he then set out the full text of that inscription. The wording of more run-of-the-mill tomb epitaphs also reflected the new emphasis. In the 1520s at Forncett St Peter (Norfolk), a lesser gentleman, Thomas Drake, asked 'all Christian peple that walk by thys Tomb erly or late' to pray for his soul.[41] The phrase 'all Christian people' carried much the same meaning as 'passers-by' had in earlier times. The difference was that at the end of the Middle Ages it was no mere empty formula: it carried real weight.

The question of audience, however, raises another question in turn: in what language was the inscription to communicate its message? For the greater part of the Middle Ages many, perhaps most, inscriptions were in Latin, a language incomprehensible to the majority. If, with the passage of time, increasing numbers could read the letters on the inscription plate, could they actually make sense of what they said? The question of audience is intimately related to that of the language in which inscriptions were written.

THE LANGUAGE OF INSCRIPTIONS

For most of the Middle Ages, England was a multilingual society. In the pre-Conquest period there were at least two languages which could be used for inscriptions—Latin and the Old English vernacular. With the coming of the Normans a third was added: French. French remained in intermittent use for the greater part of the next three centuries. Which of these languages was used depended partly on the status of the monument and partly on the audience to be addressed.

Despite its inaccessibility to many, Latin long remained the dominant language of funerary textual discourse. It owed its authority to the strength of its associations with revelation and truth. Latin in established thought was the Logos, the word of God brought to mankind, the language of the official liturgy of the Church.[42] Its magical aura would have been recognizable, if not immediately understandable, to all the faithful who heard it recited and sung for their salvation. Latin's position was dominant throughout most of Christian Europe. It was the language of the international clerical elite, which mediated between Man and God. Its use in a variety of religious settings—on epitaphs, in windows, and in sacred books—was a symbol of the universality of the Christian Church.

[41] *Collection of all the Wills*, 67; Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, 823. This is an incised slab.

[42] M. Camille, 'The Language of Images in Medieval England, 1200–1400', in J. Alexander and P. Binski (eds.), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200–1400* (London, 1987), 34–5.

Latin's dominance of funerary discourse was altogether independent of its functionality, which was limited. A good many inscriptions in the biggest stained glass windows were probably illegible to those who looked on from below. Certainly, the *tituli* or labelling devices in the tall narrative windows would have been too small to be deciphered from beneath. It is possible that these *tituli* were not in fact meant to be read at all. Their function may have been, to an extent, aesthetic: they provided an attractive way of filling empty spaces. But they were also partly validatory: they lent authentication to the images which they accompanied.

The Latin texts which featured on tomb epitaphs, however, had a more utilitarian aspect to them: they performed the vital task of eliciting intercession for the deceased's soul. In a minority of cases this function was hidden amidst the elaborate artifice of Latin hexameters. Yet even in the most arcane and convoluted compositions there was still method: the purpose of making the deceased appear pleasing in the eyes of the Almighty. There can be little doubt that most Latin epitaphs were meant to be read and, in some sense, to be understood. The evidence for this is found in the clear interest which patrons took in arranging for their monuments to be sited where they would be seen. A late medieval monument was useless if it failed to attract the passer-by's attention. Yet, if that attention were to be turned into active involvement, those passers-by would need to know for whom they were to pray. They would have been required, in other words, to make sense of a Latin epitaph. What evidence is there that they would have been able to do this?

It is all too easy to underestimate the extent of literacy in Latin in England in the late Middle Ages. By the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a working knowledge of Latin was no longer, if it had ever entirely been, the preserve of a narrow clerical elite. Most of the nobility and upper gentry would have been able to make sense of simple administrative documents in Latin. A fair number of the upper laity, moreover, would have been able to understand a straightforward religious text in Latin. It is important to remember that Latin in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was still a living language. It was the language of all formal documentation—charters, quitclaims, and feet of fines. It was also the principal language of government: letters issued in the king's name under the great seal of chancery were all written in Latin. In the world of ecclesiastical record-keeping, most wills and testaments were in Latin.

In the later Middle Ages the extension of education brought the opportunity to learn Latin within the range of a much larger part of the population. Already by the late 1100s there was a network of cathedral schools providing instruction free to endowed clerks and to others who paid. Beneath these institutions were 'reading' or 'song' schools, chiefly in the towns, to which children could be sent for instruction from about 7. In the late medieval period there was a significant expansion in the range of educational provision, particularly through the vehicle of endowed grammar schools.[43] The two grandest foundations were those of Bishop Wykeham at Winchester and King Henry VI at Eton, in 1382 and 1440

[43] For late medieval education, see N. Orme, *Medieval Schools from Roman Britain to Renaissance England* (New Haven and London, 2006), ch. 7.

respectively. More influential, because it was smaller and easier to imitate, was Lady Katherine Berkeley's foundation at Wotton-under-Edge (Glos.), where, for the first time, provision was made for teaching to be given free not only to endowed scholars but to any who came for it. In the century from 1440 a large number of endowed schools modelled on Wotton were founded, among them those at Ewelme, Higham Ferrers, Macclesfield, and Manchester. At the same time, founders of chantries or chantry colleges commonly incorporated teaching provision into foundations otherwise principally religious and intercessory. In 1362, for example, John, Lord Cobham, provided for a schoolmaster to give instruction at his college of Cobham (Kent). At Northleigh (Oxon.) the remains of a teaching alphabet are still to be seen in the window lights of the Wilcotes chantry, very close to the founder's tomb (Fig. 69).[44] There can be little doubt that by the late fifteenth century a knowledge of Latin was widely disseminated among a spectrum of the population below and beyond the elite. In the towns this group is likely to have numbered some 40 per cent of the population.[45] If, at the end of the Middle Ages, Latin was still endowed with a mystical quality as the language of truth—which was probably the case—there was a significant lay audience capable of gaining access to that truth.

From the second half of the thirteenth century the dominance of Latin came to be challenged by the rise in status of the two vernaculars, French and English. The latter in its pre-Conquest version of Old English had already been widely used on inscriptions in the eighth and ninth centuries. With its decline in status after the Conquest, however, it passed rapidly out of the repertory. In the thirteenth century the vernacular of the new aristocratic elite—French—came to be used, particularly on lay epitaphs, in its place. Yet a century later, as a result of the sharpening of national identity associated with the Hundred Years War, French in its turn faced challenge. English, in the form which we recognize as Middle English, rose rapidly in status, being spoken widely at court. Inscriptions in English, found on a few tombs in the late fourteenth century, were to become relatively common in the fifteenth.

In the period after the eleventh-century Norman expansion French, like Latin, had something of the character of an international language. It was spoken not only in France—broadly defined—but by the upper classes in England and South Wales, Burgundy and the Low Countries and in the crusader-settled East. Considering, however, that the Normans had arrived in England in 1066, its emergence as a language for funerary epitaphs came surprisingly late. It was not extensively used on monuments until the second half of the thirteenth century. The explanation for this delay is probably to be found in the difficulty which French faced in gaining acceptance as a language of authority and record. The reputation of Latin as the main language of record remained so powerful that it was never easy for another language, least of all a vernacular, to challenge it. The earliest evidence of a rise in the status of French comes with the making and

[44] P. A. Newton, *The County of Oxford: A Catalogue of Medieval Stained Glass* (London, 1979), 159.

[45] S. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London* (Chicago, 1948), 158.

issue of a French translation of Magna Carta sometime in the 1220s.[46] Thirty years later at the time of the Baronial Wars a limited number of royal letters to the sheriffs were written in French for ease of comprehension. By Edward I's reign the use of French for letters issued under the lesser seals had become all but routine. By the time of the assertion of English rule in Scotland and Wales French had arrived as a language of record—if only for a brief time before its eclipse by English.

On tomb epitaphs French was employed principally, but not invariably, on the monuments of the laity. French had the authority of a language of lordship and landownership; it was associated in people's minds with power and status. For this reason it made the appropriate language for use on knightly monuments. Its use declined after the closing decades of the fourteenth century. None the less, even in the years of its eclipse it gained periodic renewed vigour from French immigration. Every time a French-speaking queen arrived in England French-speaking attendants would come with her. In the early 1400s the arrival of Joan of Navarre as Henry IV's second queen, left its mark in the French epitaphs by which members of her retinue were commemorated.

The re-emergence of English as an elite language probably occurred much earlier than our written sources would suggest. The first courtly poet to use English as a medium for the writing of high-status poetry was Geoffrey Chaucer in the late fourteenth century. There is evidence, however, that English was regularly spoken in elite circles as early as the 1340s—and it may have been spoken well before that.[47] The first English inscription to survive on a monument is of uncertain date, perhaps *c*.1300–40. It consists of a marginal epitaph on a slab with the sunk bust of a woman at Stow (Lincs.):[48]

Alle men that bere lif Prai for Emme was Fuk wife

The choice of English for this inscription is probably a reflection of the local, non-metropolitan origin of the monument.

From the next half-century there survive a number of English inscriptions, all of them on brasses. The earliest is the enigmatic inscription to John the Smith at Brightwell Baldwin (Oxon.), *c*.1370:

Man com & se how schal alle dede be: wen yow comes bad & bare:
Noth hab ven be away fare: All ye werines yt be for care:
Bot yt ve do for Godysluf ve have nothyng yare: Hundyr
yis grave lys Johan ye Smyth God yif hys soule heven grit.

[46] Clanchy, *Memory to Written Record*, 170–1.

[47] J. Coleman, *English Literature in History, 1350–1400* (London, 1981), 52. The written use of English, as evidenced by the surviving records, almost certainly lagged far behind the spoken.

[48] The letters are of brass inlays. Also apparently of early date is an inscription accompanying a sculpted effigy of a priest at Wellington (Som.). I am grateful to Sally Badham for drawing my attention to this monument.

It is possible that the macabre tone of this inscription is to be explained by the presence of a cadaver effigy above, but equally it could reflect a source in popular poetry.[49] Two slightly later, more conventional, English inscriptions are on brasses commemorating members of the gentry. One is the inscription to Sir Thomas and Lady Walsh at Wanlip (Leics.), 1393, and the other that of the Lancastrian official Henry Nottingham and his wife at Holme next the Sea (Norfolk), *c*.1405. It is significant that both of these epitaphs record the performance of good works, in each case the rebuilding of the church. The reason for their composition in the vernacular was presumably to attract the intercession of the lay parishioners who lacked Latin.

On some epitaphs a switch of language from Latin to English was made when a wider lay audience was sought. At Morley (Derby.) the first of two inscriptions to John Stathum (d. 1454), lord of the manor, records an obit he had instituted and is in Latin, while the other which lists his good works is in English: the choice of English for the latter allowing the wider faithful to refer to those good works in their prayers. On Ralph Woodford's exotic incised slab at Ashby Folville (Leics.), *c*.1485, the familiar creed text from Job was given in Latin at the head, while some cautionary lines on human mortality were given in English lower down to prompt intercession (Fig. 76).[50]

In the fifteenth century, inscriptions in English still formed a minority despite the adoption of the native tongue as the universal vernacular. For the most part they were confined to the monuments of the townsmen, the lesser gentry, and well-to-do freeholders.[51] Only in the early sixteenth century did they begin to outnumber those in Latin. Freed from the constraint of established Latin forms, English inscriptions could sometimes take an unconventional turn. On John Bowf's brass, *c*.1417, at Pakefield (Suffolk) the following lines are found:

Al schul we hen
Whedir ne when
May no man ken
But God a bove
For other we car
Hen schul we far
Full pore & bar
Thus seyde John Bowf

English inscriptions afford far stronger evidence than those in Latin of the exercise of choice by patrons. Some very unconventional texts could be pressed into use. On brasses at Kelshall (Herts.) (Fig. 78), St Edmund's, Lombard St, and St Peter's,

[49] For the likely existence of a cadaver effigy, now lost, see above, 312–3.

[50] Woodford is shown emaciated in an open shroud. Two languages are used on the inscriptions to Sir William de Etchingham (d. 1389) at Etchingham (Sussex). The inscription above the knight's head recording his rebuilding of the church is in Latin, and the moralizing inscription at the foot in French.

[51] It is striking that English was hardly ever used on *tituli* in stained glass windows.

Figure 78. Kelshall (Herts.): Richard Adane (d. 1435) and his wife

Cornhill, both in London, variants of the following quatrain, drawing on the topos of the avarice of executors, are found:

> Man ye behovyth ofte to have this in mind
> That thow geveth with thin hond that sall thow fynd
> For widows be sloful and children beth unkynd
> Executors be covetos and kep all that they fynd
> If any body esk wher the deddys goodys becam
> They ansqueare
> So God me help and Halidam he died a pore man.
> Think on this.[52]

Unconventional moralizing inscriptions of this sort may have been common on memorials of burgesses in the towns. Memorials in urban churches, however, have suffered a much lower survival rate than those in the countryside. Even with the aid of Weever's and Stow's records of London inscriptions, it is difficult to tell just how wide was the range of texts employed in composition.

[52] Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, 413.

WHO LIES HERE? THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE COMMEMORATED

How are we to interpret the way in which the commemorated, particularly the laity, constructed themselves on their tomb epitaphs? Is it possible to detect in the growing richness of inscriptions a burgeoning sense of selfhood? In the nineteenth century Burckhardt maintained that in the Middle Ages people only saw themselves as members of groups.[53] More recently, however, Philippe Ariès has argued for a slow but definite increase in sense of individual identity.[54]

From the early fifteenth century it is possible to detect an increase in the amount of biographical detail included on epitaphs. At Drayton Beauchamp (Bucks.), for example, Sir John Cheyne (d. 1468) was said to have decapitated a giant in the course of a long career spent fighting the infidel. A few years later at Balsham (Cambs.) the descent of the rector, John Blodwell, into premature blindness was lamented. Exceptionally, on Seman Tong's brass at Faversham (Kent) the deceased's age at death was given—he was said to have lived to a remarkable 80.[55] In the case of knights killed in battle details of the fatal engagement were sometimes given. At Whitchurch (Salop) the first earl of Shrewsbury was said to have been killed at Castillon, the last battle of the Hundred Years War, while at Mavesyn Ridware (Staffs.) Sir Robert Mavesyn's death on the royal side at Shrewsbury was mourned.[56] By the early sixteenth century summary biographies of the deceased were sometimes included on epitaphs. At Swansea, *c.*1510, Sir Hugh Johns's epitaph recorded his career in arms, first in the East and later in France under John, duke of Bedford. Most remarkable was the biography on the brass to Sir Marmaduke Constable at Flamborough (Yorks.), 1520, which began:

> Here lieth Marmaduke Cunstable, of fflaynborght, knyght,
> Who made advento into ffrance, and for the right of the same
> Passed over with kyng Edwarde the fourtht, yt noble knight;
> And also with noble king Herre, the sevinth of that name.
> He was also at Harwick, at the winnyng of the same,
> And by kyng Edward chosy Capteyn there first of any one;
> And rewllid and governid ther his tyme without blame.
> Bot for all that, as ye se, he lieth under thys stone,

[53] J. Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (London, 1960), 81.

[54] Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, 293, 609.

[55] Exceptional for a brass of this date, 1414; recording of age becomes more common in the 16th cent., perhaps a by-product of the development of parish records which allowed parishioners to establish their age.

[56] R. Gough, *The Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain* (London, 1786–99), ii. i. cccxiv (Castillon was represented on the inscription as Bordeaux); BL, Harley MS 2129, fo. 147^{v}.

> At Brankiston feld, wher the kyng of Scottys was slayne,
> He then beyng of the age of thre score and tene,
> With the gode duke of Northefolke yt jorney he haye tayn

And so it continued. The inscription ends on a gloomy, and highly traditional, note, however, by emphasizing the transience of earthly glory.

Inscriptions incorporating biographical detail became more common in the 1520s and 1530s in the wake of the arrival of humanist influence from the Continent. Two of the most noteworthy examples are provided by the epitaphs to Sir Thomas More at Chelsea and the second duke of Norfolk at Thetford Priory. Yet even by the mid-sixteenth century such inscriptions never formed more than a small minority of the total commissioned. In the great majority of cases the information was still confined to the absolute minimum—the deceased's name and status, his or her date of death, and the request for prayer and appeal for God's mercy. What is remarkable in the late Middle Ages is less the increase in the information included on epitaphs than the modest scale of that increase. Even on epitaphs which give information about the commemorated, that information was carefully rationed. On the brass of Peter de Lacy (d. 1375) at Northfleet (Kent), for example, the deceased's possession of a prebend in St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin, was mentioned, but not his appointment as the king's keeper of the privy seal, nor his connections with the Black Prince, his patron and the sponsor of his administrative career. On the brasses of many other royal clerks—John Sleford's at Balsham, for example—details of ecclesiastical preferments, gifts to churches, and contributions to the repair of church fabrics were singled out for attention, but hardly ever positions in public and private administration besides the most senior. On one brass to an important late fourteenth-century cleric no biographical details at all were included. This was the brass of John Campden, Wykeham's chief agent, at St Cross, Winchester, the texts on which are entirely liturgical.[57]

The reason for this highly selective approach to biography is to be found in the supreme importance of the liturgical function of the monument. On virtually all epitaphs the construction of selfhood was constrained by, and set within, the need for intercessory prayer. The only details selected for inclusion were those considered essential to tempt the priest or passer-by to pray for the deceased. The liturgical imperative explains the keen interest shown in so many epitaphs in the deceased's good works. Even in epitaphs of a seemingly personal or idiosyncratic nature it was the needs of the next world which were dominant. At Etchingham (Sussex), for example, the picturesque detail that Sir William de Etchingham died

[57] Campden commissioned the brass in his lifetime, *c.*1390. He was Master of the Hospital of St Cross. The strongly liturgical character of this brass may in part be accounted for by its original position before the new altar, which he provided. For his career, see A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500* (3 vols., Oxford, 1957–9), i. 343–4. He was archdeacon of Surrey and a canon of Southwell; he held the rectories of Cheriton and Farnham (both Hants). Wykeham employed him as co-feoffee in the acquisition of lands for Winchester College and New College, Oxford.

'around midnight' was set within a discourse on human mortality the purpose of which was to stimulate prayer for the deceased. On Earl Richard Beauchamp's epitaph at St Mary's, Warwick, the celebration of the deceased's career in France was all but eclipsed by the lengthy details of the return of his body to England, the establishment of his chantry chapel, and the fulfilment by his executors of their testamentary duties—all information relevant to the task of securing the safe passage of the earl's soul to the afterlife. So long as the primary function of the monument was to elicit prayers for the deceased—which was the case to the Reformation—then the celebration of his or her achievements in life would remain, by comparison with later periods, undeveloped.

To say this, however, is to focus on only one aspect of the problem of social construction. The medieval monument was not only a spur to intercession; it was a witness to worldly standing, an ensign of the deceased's place in the social pecking-order. This secondary function likewise had an effect on the construction of the individual on the epitaph. When biographical details were included, it was not so much to provide an outline *curriculum vitae* of the deceased as to supply all-important evidence of status. Thus key offices and magnate retainerships were regularly cited for the evidence they afforded of the holder's gentility. At Stoke Rochford (Lincs.) Oliver St John (d. 1503) was described as an esquire to the duchess of Somerset to associate him with a lady with royal connections. At Berkhamsted (Herts.) Robert Incent's service to Cecily, duchess of York, was singled out for mention to connect him with a still grander lady—'mother unto [two kings] the worthy kyng Edward the iiii and Richard the thirde'. Even soldiers' careers in arms were configured largely in terms of the offices they had held. At Little Horkesley (Essex) Sir Thomas Swinborne's career in south-west France was summarized as 'lord of Hammys, mayor of Bordeaux, captain of Fronsac', while at Dodford (Northants) Sir John Cressy's career was captured in like fashion: he was described as captain of Lisieux, Orbef, and Pont-l'Évêque in Normandy and counsellor to the Regent, the duke of Bedford (Fig. 77).

The construction of the deceased's position in the pecking-order could sometimes be enhanced by including details of good ancestry. In his will of 1496 John Pympe asked for a long inscription detailing his ancestry to go on his tomb at Nettlestead (Kent).[58] Some gentry went to extraordinary lengths to demonstrate their descent from members of the blue-blooded aristocracy. The inscription on Sir Thomas Green's brass, 1462, at Green's Norton (Northants) read like a book of the Old Testament: (in translation) 'Here lies Sir Thomas Green, son and heir of Sir Thomas Green by Philippa, daughter of Robert, Lord Ferrers of Chartley, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas, Lord Despenser; this Sir Thomas was the son and heir of Sir Thomas Green by his wife Mary, daughter of Richard, Lord Talbot and his wife Ankarette, daughter and heiress of John, Lord Strange of Blackmere.' Only slightly more modest was the inscription on Thomas Mohun's brass at Lanteglos by Fowey (Cornwall), *c.*1440, which linked him to the extinct

[58] TNA: PRO, PROB/11, fo. 21^{r-v}.

senior line of his family (again in translation): 'Here lie Thomas de Mohun and John, his father, son and heir of Sir Reginald de Mohun and Elizabeth, his wife, daughter and heiress of Sir John Fitzwilliam, and second brother of John, last Lord Mohun' ('. . . secundus frater Johannis ultimi Domini de Mohun'). A brass to a later Mohun in the same church linked the family with the Courtenay earls of Devon. In some cases the message of the inscription was reinforced visually by the display of arms on the monument. On Sir Thomas Chaworth's brass formerly at Launde Abbey (Leics.), 1458, the elaborate heraldic display, consisting of the arms of no fewer than eleven families on nine shields, provided a visual counterpart to the details of the descent of the Chaworth estate set out on the lengthy inscription.[59] A similar concern to establish links between heraldry and text is found on the highly lineage-conscious brasses of the Catesby family at Ashby St Ledgers.[60]

In their two overriding concerns to negotiate the safe passage of the deceased's soul and to attest the deceased's social station, medieval inscriptions offered little anticipation of the humanistic concerns of post-Reformation epitaphs. The construction of the medieval inscription was rooted firmly in the social and liturgical priorities of the pre-Reformation and pre-Renaissance world. Hardly any sense was afforded yet of the Renaissance cult of honour. Nor is there much indication of a sense of the deceased as an individual detached from a family group. On most inscriptions the group was accorded greater importance than the individual and the priorities of the next world greater importance than those of this. Even where the deceased was located occupationally, the office was considered more important than the individual who filled it.

The main exception to these generalizations is provided by the Latin verse inscriptions which became fashionable around the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Typically these were couched in hexameter form, with so-called leonine (i.e. internal) rhymes. Influenced by classical or pseudo-classical constructions, on the surface they present a different view of the commemorated from the standard inscriptions of the 'Hic iacet . . . ' sort. Generally, the aim was to present a eulogy of the deceased's character and virtues. One of the better examples of such an inscription is found on the brass of the woolman John Linwood (d. 1419) and his wife at Linwood (Lincs.):

Qui contemplaris lapidem modicum—rogo—siste
Et precibus caris dic salvi sint tibi Christe
Spiritus in requie Lyndewode sine labe Johannis
Eius at Alicie consortis pluribus annis
Anno Milleno C quarter nono quoque deno
Mense virum Jani mors luce tulit Juliani
X quarter atque tribus annis hi corde jocundi
Convixere quibus nati fuerant oriundi

[59] For the Chaworth brass, now lost, see J. Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* (4 vols. in 8, London, 1795–1811), iii. i. 328.

[60] Bertram (ed.), *The Catesby Family and their Brasses* (2006), xv–xix, 51–5.

Septem qui pedibus tot gaudent pulvere fundi
Vermibus ecce cibus sic transit gloria mundi[61]

These verse hexameters were generally more worldly in character than the brief two-line epitaphs appealing for prayers. Thus the hexameters adorning Edward III's tomb in Westminster Abbey hailed him as a leopard, celebrating his martial triumphs, while on Richard II's tomb, adjacent, the equivalent verses acclaimed him as 'full of reason and . . . wise as Homer'. In a lengthy epitaph at Brightwell Baldwin (Oxon.) Judge Cottesmore (d. 1439) (Fig. 29) was praised for his dispassionate justice, good judgement, and fairness to all. At Canterbury Cathedral a fifteenth-century prior, John Woodnesborough, was lauded for his generosity and his service to his house.[62] These ornate epitaphs come closer in spirit to those employed on post-Reformation monuments than any other from the Middle Ages. Strikingly they show an interest, unusual for the period, in recording personal details. John Linwood's at Linwood (Lincs.), for example, recorded the length of his marriage—43 years—while on Archbishop Sudbury's at Canterbury his 'martyr's death' at the hands of the peasant rebels was noted.[63]

Yet, for all their apparent humanist credentials, these hexameter inscriptions were still constrained by the liturgical function of the monument. In many cases they presented the usual diet of information about good works, packaged in a different form. On John Priest's epitaph at St Michael Coslany, Norwich, mention of the deceased's gift of an alabaster altarpiece to the church was worked almost without effort into the eulogy.[64] Moralizing sentiments on the transience of earthly life were not uncommon. On John Cottesmore's inscription at Brightwell Baldwin the tribute to the deceased judge was preceded by a lament at his decay into ashes. The usual medieval concern with status, kinship, and connections was never far from sight. On the inscriptions to Norwich burgesses in the churches of that city details of office, trade, and mistery were invariably recorded. On the epitaph on his brass at Kidderminster (Worcs.) Sir John Phelip's service to King Henry V was not allowed to escape attention. The content of these rhyming hexameters was considerably more traditional than the literary form in which they were couched. In some cases, for example the elegiacs to Robert Fitzhugh, bishop of London (d. 1436), in St Paul's, the amount of biographical information was actually very

[61] I beg you, who are contemplating this unostentatious stone, pause awhile,
And say with loving prayers that safe be with Thee, Christ,
In their rest, and unharrowed, the souls of John Lyndewode, a man without blemish,
And of Alice, the sharer of his destiny, his wife of many years' standing.
In the year one thousand four-hundred nine and ten,
In the month of January—on St Julian's day—death carried the man out of the light.
For forty-three years did these two, in the kindness of their hearts,
Live together, and unto them had been born offspring
Seven. Those many who enjoy their freedom of movement—like these two here,
see—will lie in the dust of the ground,
A meal for the worms. Thus vanishes the glory of the world.

R. Lamp, 'Foot Inscriptions on Three Lincolnshire Brasses', *TMBS* 17 (2003), 24–30.

[62] Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, 236. [63] Ibid. 224. [64] Ibid. 803.

little.[65] Rhetorical adjustment was unable to conceal continuity with a set of ideas which considered the epitaph concerned less with individual identity than with preparing the deceased for the afterlife.

THE AUTHORSHIP OF INSCRIPTIONS

If the great majority of medieval inscriptions were formulaic, ringing the changes on a few stock phrases, a small but significant number were longer and more varied. Some of the latter, as we have seen—the hexameters—if convoluted, still drew on reserves of literary artifice. Who composed these more elaborate inscriptions? And on what sources did their authors draw?

The authors of the majority of the grander epitaphs were members of the educated clergy. Not before the mid-fifteenth century is there firm evidence of lay authorship. Most of the inscriptions found in monasteries were almost certainly composed by members of the communities themselves, or those approached by them. Weever tells us that at St Albans Abbot John Wheathamsted was involved in the composition of epitaphs: 'John Whethamsted, the fore remembred Abbot, made certaine epitaphs for religious persons, and others here interred; as also in other churches hereabouts. Which for the most part are now either taken away, or stolne . . . from their Grave-Stones . . . Yet it will not be lost labour to take and imprint them out of the Manuscript.'[66] He then went on to reproduce over a dozen verse epitaphs once found on tombs in the Abbey. Among the inscriptions which Wheathampsted composed for 'neighbouring churches' are probably the verse epitaph to his parents, Hugh and Margaret Bostok, at Wheathampstead itself and the curious set of rhyming verses to Thomas Frowick, a landowner, at South Mimms, also in Hertfordshire.

Among educated churchmen, Abbot Wheathamsted was by no means alone in engaging in the composition of epitaphs. William Lyndewood (Linwood), the canonist, almost certainly composed the verse epitaphs on the brasses laid to his parents and elder brother at Linwood (Lincs.). Centuries before, the celebrated Anglo-Norman chronicler Orderic Vitalis had composed an epitaph for the tomb of Earl Waltheof in Crowland Abbey.[67] Well-educated churchmen probably quite often engaged in the pietistic task of composing epitaphs for deceased relatives or associates. Philip Polton, archdeacon of Gloucester, was almost certainly responsible for the verses on the brass to his parents at Wanborough (Wilts.), while Archbishop Kemp of York may well have composed the epitaph to his own parents at Wye (Kent). When, as was often the case, churchmen ordered memorials for themselves in their lifetimes, they presumably also prescribed the content of their epitaphs. At Durham the unlikely figure of Bishop Beaumont, ridiculed by a contemporary for his illiteracy, had a hand in this process. According to the *Rites of Durham*, he

[65] Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, 360. [66] Ibid. 574.
[67] *Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ii, ed. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1969), 351.

'peculiarly selected for his spirituall consolation' the numerous texts which were one of the brass's most notable features.[68]

There is other evidence which points to clerical involvement in the composition of epitaphs. From a parchment fragment reused as a bookmark we learn that Bishop Gray of Ely had his chaplain draft the inscription for the tomb of his agent Richard Thwaites (d. 1467).[69] From another chance survival we learn that Stephen, a chantry priest, was responsible for the rhyming Latin verses once on the brass of Sir Peter Arderne (d. 1467) at Latton (Essex).[70] By the mid-fifteenth century it is likely that a good many clergy were composing the epitaphs for their memorials. John Preston and Thomas Salter in London and Henry Mountford in Norwich all set out the texts for their epitaphs in their wills.[71] In the sixteenth century, in the wake of the spread of humanistic ideas, academics were particularly given to composing their epitaphs. John Claimond at Oxford and John White at Winchester College were two such men who drafted the texts by which they presented themselves to posterity and negotiated their passage to the afterlife.

If the majority of the more literary epitaphs were composed by clergy, there is evidence by the fifteenth century that laymen were sometimes engaging in the task. Peter Idley (d. 1474), author of the English verse *Instructions to his Son*, was responsible for the foot inscription, also in English, on his brass in Dorchester Abbey.[72] A set of English verses formerly on the brass of Thomas Clere, 1545, at Lambeth (Surrey) were composed by the commemorated's friend, the poet Henry Howard, earl of Surrey.[73] These are two perhaps rather exceptional cases; it is surely to be doubted if many gentry were possessed of the ability to compose an epitaph of distinction. Most lay patrons by the late Middle Ages, however, would have been competent enough to provide a draft of a more routine kind of inscription. In his draft contract with Reames Richard Willoughby laid out precisely the wording of the epitaph for his tomb at Wollaton (Notts.).[74] It is probably the direct involvement of the commemorated in composition which explains popularity of puns on names in inscriptions. Word play, a form of humour that appealed to the medieval imagination, is particularly common on inscriptions which the commemorated themselves commissioned.

Where the contract for the tomb was placed after the deceased's death, it is likely that the executors played a key role in drafting the epitaph. There can be little doubt that Earl Richard Beauchamp's executors had a hand in drafting his inscription at

[68] *Rites of Durham*, 15–16.

[69] R. Emmerson, 'Monumental Brasses: London Design', *JBAA* 131 (1978), 51.

[70] Haines, *A Manual of Monumental Brasses*, xcv.

[71] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/3, fo. 179^{r}; Greenwood, 'Will of Thomas Salter', 280–95; Blomefield, *Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, iv. 487. One of the first to provide a draft in a will was the royal wardrobe clerk William Packington in 1389: Lambeth Palace Library, Register of Archbishop Courtenay, fo. 234^{v}.

[72] J. Bertram, 'Fragments from Oxfordshire', *TMBS* 16 (2000–1), 378–86.

[73] Haines, *Manual of Monumental Brasses*, xcv.

[74] Saul, 'Contract for the Brass of Richard Willoughby', 168.

St Mary's, Warwick, given its emphasis on their discharge of their responsibilities. In a handful of cases the involvement of executors may be inferred from a degree of overlap between the inscription and the deceased's will. At Cirencester (Glos.), for example, the passage in Robert Pagge's inscription, 1440, celebrating his work in repairing local roads must imply a knowledge of the provision in his will of money for the repair of the road at Eaton by Cricklade.[75] It was only natural for executors to include mention of good works of this sort as evidence which passers-by could include in their prayers.

The sources for inscription texts were probably as varied as the inscriptions themselves. The wording of the simplest 'Hic iacet' or 'Orate pro anima' forms was almost certainly available in formularies compiled by clerks for inspection in workshops by clients. The more elaborate forms of epitaph drafted by the likes of Abbot Wheathamsted were probably available in book form too, for the use of clients known to the author. Inscriptions of a more literary turn probably originated in collections of narratives or *exempla*. The Black Prince's epitaph at Canterbury, for example, was drawn from a thirteenth-century French version of the *Disciplina Clericalis* of Peter Alphonsi.[76] Inscriptions in English probably originated in anthologies of popular verse which circulated informally between households. The curious verses found at Kelshall and elsewhere dwelling on the sins of relatives and executors were based on a doggerel poem which belonged to this genre. A version of the poem is found in Richard Hill's commonplace book of the early sixteenth century.[77]

It is more difficult to guess how the genealogical information on the less run-of-the-mill gentry inscriptions was assembled and put together. The compilation of these inscriptions implies considerable powers of recall on the part of those who composed them. It is possible that the twists and turns of genealogical descent were stored in the family memory and passed down over the generations. With the passing of time, however, recollection of such information would have become increasingly difficult, making resort to the written record essential. To assist in the defence of their properties, gentry families often compiled cartularies, collections of deeds relating to their lands. At the beginning of these they would sometimes include a genealogy of the family. It is likely that the genealogies in the Old Testament-like epitaphs were derived from such sources. Information of this sort about family descent could be of value in a variety of settings. It might be employed when inquisitions *post mortem* were being taken. In 1390, when Ralph, Lord Basset, died, and his line with him, a knowledge of his family's history and that of its collaterals stretching over three generations was needed to identify his heir.[78] A store of family knowledge which had been assembled principally to defend title could be useful on epitaphs as evidence of the time-honoured link between family and place.

[75] TNA: PRO, PROB 11/3, fo. 215^{v}.

[76] Tyson, 'The Epitaph of Edward, the Black Prince', 98–104.

[77] *Songs, Carols and Other Miscellaneous Poems*, ed. R. Dyboski (Early English Text Soc. 101, 1907), 138.

[78] *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, xvi, no. 970.

In the mid- to late sixteenth century a series of changes took place in the style and content of inscriptions which made them very different from those of the Middle Ages. Not only were requests for intercessory prayer abandoned in favour of wordy eulogistic tributes to the deceased; in the language of Renaissance humanism a new vocabulary was found which could be used for the expression of such Baroque tributes.[79] These changes were the result of a complex web of factors. If the replacement of Catholicism by Protestantism was the most obvious of them, equally important was the Classical revival which encouraged the use of Antique sources in funerary writing. By 1600 medieval epitaphs looked old-fashioned: they were mainly of interest to heralds, antiquaries, and elderly religious conservatives who harked for the good old days. What is remarkable, however, is not so much that in the end the medieval forms were superseded as the sheer length of time they had lasted. The forms of epitaph in use at the beginning of the sixteenth century were essentially those in use in Anglian Northumbria nearly eight centuries before. The face of English society may have changed beyond recognition in that period of time. But the nature of man's relationship with his Maker had changed hardly at all.

[79] For the 16th-cent. changes, see R. Rex, 'Monumental Brasses and the Reformation', *TMBS* 14 (1990), 376–94.

15

Prospect and Retrospect

The turbulent decades of the Reformation witnessed a major shift in popular attitudes to funerary monuments in England. The change of mood found clearest expression in the physical attacks on monument by the Protestant zealots. The attacks were short-lived, however; in 1560 the defacement of monuments was declared illegal. More important in the long term was redefinition of memorialization in the direction of a more secular and classical concept of remembrance of the dead.

At the heart of the assault on monuments was the legislative assault on the set of beliefs which invested them with meaning and purpose, the doctrine of purgatory. Purgatory had survived the early reforming initiatives of Henry VIII's reign. In the *Ten Articles*, published in 1536, the authorities still allowed that the dead could benefit from the intercessory prayers of the living. A more critical approach was adopted in the main enactment of the king's later years, the *King's Book* of 1543. In this document for the first time the value of intercessory prayer was called into question. Although it was said that Christians could 'cause other(s) to pray for them . . . as well in masses and exequies', it was also stressed that 'it is not in the power and knowledge of any man to limit and dispense how much, and in what space of time, or to what person particularly the said masses and exequies do profit and avail'.[1] This pronouncement denying any knowledge of the state of the departed did much to weaken the case for intercessory endeavour.

The Henrician injunctions afforded a clear indication of the direction in which policy was developing in Henry's later years. The main assault on purgatory, however, was to come in the next reign, that of Henry's son, Edward VI. In 1547 the central institutions of intercessory prayer, the chantries, were abolished. In the preamble to the statute an insulting reference was inserted to 'the Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration, as well of Images as of reliques, and also invocation of Saints'; while, at the same time, purgatory was said to be 'a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God'.[2] By the time of the Prayer Book of 1552, the idea that the dead could benefit from the intercessory attentions

[1] *The King's Book*, ed. T. A. Lacey (London, 1932), 163–5.

[2] P. Lindley, '"Disrespect for the Dead"? The Destruction of Tomb Monuments in mid Sixteenth-Century England', *CM* 19 (2004), 53–79, at 68. For further discussion, see Lindley, *Tomb Destruction and Scholarship* (2007), ch. 1.

of the living had been decisively dismissed. Chantries, colleges, guilds, obits, and anniversaries were all deprived of their doctrinal rationale.

The physical assault on monuments had already begun well before the doctrinal assault approached its height. In the wake of the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s, tombs and brasses in monastic houses condemned to closure were dismantled and sold off. At Darley Abbey (Derby.) metal from tombs and gravestones was disposed of, along with lead from the roofs, for £ 20. At the Cistercian house of Merevale (War.) six gravestones with brasses on them were sold in 1538 for 5*s*.[3] Once the prohibition of purgatory was enacted, the assault on funerary sculpture became more comprehensive, encompassing monuments in parish churches and cathedrals. Many hundreds of tombs and brasses were subjected to attack or defacement by reformers. The most virulently anti-Catholic of the bishops, such as Hooper of Gloucester, made a point of encouraging the assault. Even on monuments which escaped total destruction, such as Sir Edmund Tame's at Fairford, prayer clauses were defaced or excised and religious imagery torn from its matrices. The assault took its toll of the production of funerary monuments. Whole categories of memorial ceased to be produced—pardon brasses promising indulgences to the reader, chalice brasses showing priests in their sacrificial function, shroud and skeleton monuments and, above all, depictions of saints, of Christ, of the lamb and cross, and of the Trinity. Much later, in the 1640s, John Weever was to lament 'the foulest and most inhumane action of those times . . . the violation of Funerall Monuments'.[4]

A halt to the process of destruction was called in Elizabeth's reign. In September 1560 Elizabeth published her proclamation forbidding the disorderly destruction of monuments. Central to her concern was a fear for the loss of collective memory:

> The Queen's Majesty, understanding that . . . there hath been of late years spoiled and broken certain ancient monuments, some of metal, some of stone, which were erected up . . . only to show a memory to the posterity of the persons there buried, or that had been benefactors to the buildings or donations of the same churches or public places, and not to nourish any kind of superstition; by which means not only the churches and places remain at this present day spoiled, broken and ruinated, to the offence of all noble and gentle hearts and the extinguishing of the honourable and good memory of sundry virtuous and noble persons deceased;

it was accordingly felt necessary to effect the 'speedy repair or re-edification of any such monuments so defaced or spoiled, as agreeable to the original as the same conveniently may be'.[5]

Monuments as a genre accordingly survived the upheavals of religious Reformation. In the brave new world of Protestant England, however, they were to serve a very different purpose from before. Instead of eliciting intercessory prayer from the passer-by, they were to honour and exalt the deceased person, eulogize his character and record for posterity his achievements. The changing function

[3] Lindley, '"Disrespect for the Dead"?', 60. [4] Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, 51.
[5] *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, ii, ed. P. L. Hughes and J. F. Larkin (London, 1969), 146–8.

of the monument was reflected in changes in its iconography and design.[6] The monuments of the aristocracy became bigger and grander, often incorporating classical-style chests and large architectural superstructures. New sculptural forms were introduced showing effigies reclining, sometimes with their heads on their hands, or kneeling, reading their Bibles at prayer desks, and with their children, also shown kneeling, lined up behind them to attest dynastic continuity. Figurative elements increasingly took the form of allegory and the symbolic representation of virtues. Above all, there was a greater emphasis on inscription text. To the background of a Protestant religion, with little liturgical activity to keep the names of the dead alive, funerary epitaphs assumed a more important role in the preservation of memory, particularly social memory. There was more eulogizing of the deceased, more celebration and recording of his offices and worldly achievements. At the same time, improving quotations from the scriptures figured more prominently in inscriptions. Post-Reformation monuments reflected the doctrinal imperatives of a more biblically based religion.

The survival of the tradition of funerary sculpture—indeed, the very vigour of that tradition in the century after the Reformation—provides powerful evidence of the appeal exerted by monuments in English social, religious, and artistic culture. If, as in the 1540s, a hostile radical elite chose to mount an attack on 'superstitious monuments', the taste for monuments, initially repressed, would re-emerge and reconfigure itself in another form. Commemoration, in whatever form it might be expressed, was woven deep into the fabric of English society.

The foundations of Christian commemoration in England had been laid early in the Anglo-Saxon period. Gravestones inscribed with appeals for prayer were produced in northern England as early as the age of Bede. By the late tenth century the scale of production already approached levels to be exceeded only in the century or two before the Reformation. In areas where output was particularly high—eastern England, for example—inscribed gravestones were being commissioned not only by members of the lay and clerical elites but by lesser proprietors who were establishing a commemorative identity for the first time. The appetite for commemoration led to the growth of a vigorous and widespread industry in the production of funerary sculpture. For the most part, the making of monuments was decentralized and dispersed, centring on quarry-based workshops rather than big *ateliers* in towns. In some areas there is evidence that craftsmen, perhaps trained at quarries, travelled around to churches to carry out commissions. Only in the case of brasses is it clear that production was based in two or three big workshops in London. Changes in client taste led to rapid changes in the popularity of monument types. A type of monument popular at elite level in one century would find itself eclipsed in status once it attracted custom lower down, the process beginning all over again when its successor in turn was eclipsed. The rapid evolution of styles of design attests the status consciousness of

[6] R. Rex, 'Monumental Brasses and the Reformation', *TMBS* 14 (1990), 376–94.

patrons and the place which funerary patronage occupied in the arena of social competition.

Monuments were shaped both by the creativity of those who produced them and by the aspirations of those who commissioned them. While the producer was responsible for supplying the designs and giving the monument its physical expression, it was the patron who determined the shape and character of the monument, its composition and size. Monuments were produced to accommodate almost every size of pocket. They might be large or small, costly or inexpensive. They could be commissioned by wealthy aristocrats, middling administrators, or modestly rewarded chantry priests. Patrons sought to express their sense of religious and social identity in their monuments. They or their agents typically laid down detailed specifications in contracts agreed with sculptors or engravers. Close attention was paid to all matters which reflected on status. The minutiae of armorial bearings and attire were almost always carefully prescribed. By the late Middle Ages a wide repertory of motifs had evolved to assist in the expression of identity. Liturgical texts and figures of saints supplied an outlet for pietistic feeling, while heraldry, livery badges, and merchants' marks helped to articulate family and occupational identity and magnate affiliation.

Tombs and monuments formed an important element in the religious and material culture of the Middle Ages. They provided an enduring medium for the funerary self-representation of the commemorated. It is naturally tempting to seek in them a source for recovery of the interiority of those they commemorate. The relationship between church monuments and the individuals commemorated, however, is actually a highly problematical one. Monuments not only reflected and expressed human experience; they also played a role in structuring and shaping it. To draw conclusions from monuments about the concerns of the commemorated may simply be to reformulate and repeat what we know about the commemorated already.

Part of the problem any observer faces is that medieval monuments are in many ways highly conventional. Although they constitute what we today consider an art form, at the time they were regarded as mere artefacts: they were commodities. We have seen that as early as the eleventh century they were being produced in the workshops in what amounted to industrial quantities. In many cases only the inscription or other identifying attributes distinguished one monument from others of its type. Most monuments afford little evidence of individuality. As historical source material, quite possibly they tell us more about those who made them than those they commemorate.

Yet the possibility of learning something of value about the commemorated should not altogether be discounted. Even the most unimpressive memorial attests a concern for the afterlife by the deceased and a determination to secure a place in social memory. Such features as its degree of elaboration and its positioning in the church—whether it is located in the chancel, the nave, or a side chapel—afford a sense of the scale of wealth at the patron's disposal and his sense of his position in the social pecking order.

With the larger and more complex monuments we can go further in the kind of deductions we make. These often grandiose compositions were typically shaped by quite detailed instructions given to sculptors or engravers by the commemorated's agents. They accordingly allow the possibility of formulating deeper and more varied insights. Interiority might reveal itself both in the general character of the tomb and in its finer details. In the monuments of the clergy, which are often marked by a strongly liturgical character and on which the subject is invariably shown in vestments, we are afforded a sense of both the separateness and the self-consciousness of the clerical estate. The monuments of the knights and esquires, as we have seen, afford many indications of the chivalric pride of the knightly class in the age of the Hundred Years War. Knightly tombs were often decked out in the trappings of chivalry—heraldry, tournament helms, crests. The ties of military companionship were sometimes attested in the selections of arms to be included in armorials. Knights who were elected to the Order of the Garter after *c.*1370 almost always displayed the garter on their left leg. In the case of civilian monuments, the brasses of the wool merchants likewise stand out for the pride shown in the trappings and accoutrements of trade. The wealth of reference on these brasses to the visual imagery of the wool trade, as revealed in representations of sheep, woolsacks, and merchants' marks, make them among the most distinctive tomb monuments to have come down from the Middle Ages.

Family strategies, otherwise largely hidden from view, can sometimes be detected in the memorials of the gentry. When a gentry lineage faced imminent extinction in the male line, it invariably ensured that its memory lived on in the shape of monuments bearing the family name. At Aldworth (Berks.) the de la Beches, who faced the prospect of extinction in the 1340s, left a series of eye-catching effigies in the church to ensure that their lordship was never forgotten there. Decline in social standing might be compensated for by increasing commemorative grandeur. At Lingfield (Surrey) the tombs of the Cobhams of Sterborough grew steadily bigger and more pretentious the further the family slipped from the nobility which their fourteenth-century members had enjoyed. Breaks and interruptions in a family's history were sometimes disguised by carefully contrived continuities in the design of monuments. At Cobham (Kent) the transition from the de Cobhams to the Brookes was elegantly smoothed over in a series of brasses which were designed to suggest that nothing significant had happened. While the theme of commemoration in response to family or dynastic crisis is a not unfamiliar one, in churches where whole series of tombs survive their changing—or unchanging—character can tell us much about the ups and downs of family fortune.

Interiority could also reveal itself in the more detailed choices which patrons made about their tombs. Whenever a patron commissioned a tomb, or gave instructions to his agents for such, he was exercising choice. He was making a decision whether to have a flat slab or a sculpted effigy; whether to be honoured by a simple inscription or by a verse elegiac; whether to have his wife alongside him or to be shown alone, whether to be shown as a knight or a civilian or in some other capacity. More generally, he might be making a decision about where in the

church to set his monument, and how it could be related to its surroundings. In the decisions which he made about these matters the patron revealed something about himself or herself. He indicated how he saw himself in relation to God and in relation to his fellow mortals. Choices made about attire on monuments are particularly instructive. Whether a man chose to be shown in armour or as a civilian indicates how he saw himself in the social pecking-order: as a member of the second estate or as one of the merely free. Whether a lawyer chose to be shown in armour or in professional dress indicates whether he considered himself primarily a professional or a landed gentleman. The decisions made by those poised on the edge of two or more estate groups are particularly revealing of their perceptions of social position.

The study of funerary sculpture necessarily entails looking at the actions of those who were the more assertive in society: it was the assertive, for the most part, who thought of commissioning monuments to themselves. Arranging to be commemorated by a tomb or brass involved staking a claim to immortality. Assertiveness revealed itself in a variety of ways—in the jostling for position for a monument, in the eagerness to catch the onlooker's attention, in the grandeur and complexity of the monument itself. We should resist the temptation, however, to equate assertiveness with the emergence of something approaching 'individualism'. Any attempt to interpret the history of funerary sculpture, particularly in the late Middle Ages, in terms of the 'rise of the individual' or the 'rise of individualism' is doomed to failure. The way in which selfhood revealed itself on monuments suggests that patrons thought instinctively in terms of a group identity.[7] On inscriptions the subject of a monument was represented socially as a member of an estate, and occupationally as a member of a trade or profession. In the heraldic displays on gentry tombs the commemorated was seen dynastically as a representative of a lineage. In both text and image the deceased was set at the intersection of a series of overlapping and mutually reinforcing group networks. Even in the construction of his passage to the afterlife the deceased's person was meshed in a set of relationships, the ties which linked the living to the dead. On very few memorials was the deceased seen as a unique individual. Typically, he was portrayed as a socially and culturally constructed entity. Text and image were geared to positioning his person within a system—characteristically in medieval Christendom the set of networks joining the living and the dead in a relationship of mutual dependence. Piety and social expression in medieval England were joined as warp and weft.

The effects of social competition were also moderated by a concern for commemorative deference. When choosing a suitable site for their tombs, patrons generally showed a regard for their surroundings. If there was a convention in a church for the tombs of the laity to be relegated to the nave or transepts or side chapels, lay patrons would defer to that. An apparently presumptuous act such as the placing of a tomb in front of the high altar, as at Strelley and Lingfield, is usually explicable

[7] See above, 136, 358.

in terms of the honour accorded to a founder. A sense of propriety can be seen to inform tomb design. It was generally accepted that a monument should not overawe its surroundings but should be absorbed into them. Where a monument was considered inappropriate or intrusive, measures would be taken to ensure its modification. This was the case with Bishop Giffard's proposed monument of *c*.1301 in Worcester Cathedral.[8] Typically, a monument, particularly one of three-dimensional form, was seen as a constituent element in the overall fabric of the church in which it was located. As a result, the larger identity of the church transcended that of the monument, just as that of the family or group did its subject.

The picture of medieval English society revealed by its funerary sculpture is thus a fairly clear one. The impression is given of a vigorous and assertive society in which the disruptive effects of competition were held in check by a series of interlocking bonds, prime among them the bonds of kinship and association. For all the evidence of social competition played out in the arena of funerary sculpture the overall picture, paradoxically, is one of cohesion. It is none the less indicative of the instinct for individual self-assertion that so many people in medieval England should have sought commemoration at all. There is at least some evidence to suggest that in England the commemorative urge was spread more widely than in many neighbouring societies. Gentry and sub-gentry, chaplains and chantry priests, serving men and independent peasant proprietors, all sought physical witness to their memory. Comparison with the funerary evidence from other European societies is not at all easy when the rate of loss is so uneven. In France, for example, while the losses in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were less severe than in England, the Revolution of the 1790s exacted a toll unparalleled north of the Channel. On the evidence of what is known of extant and lost memorials, however, there may be reason to believe that patrons were drawn from a wider social range in England than in France or elsewhere. The sheer number of monuments commissioned in England seems unparalleled; and it may be the case that the range of monument types was likewise exceptional. Why England should have stood out in this way is not altogether clear. It is possible that there were differences in the organization of intercession on the two sides of the Channel: conceivably, on the European mainland greater reliance was placed on collective intercession by fraternities, obviating the need for individual memorials. Whether or not this was so, it is tempting to wonder if there may also have been social pressures making for wider commemoration in England. Why, for example, did the separate inlay brass evolve in England but not in all parts of the Continent? The separate inlay method made for greater flexibility in production, allowing the needs of poorer clients to be accommodated more easily. In England quite low-status clients were able to commission memorials, whereas in France they could not so easily do so. Conceivably, the English proprietor class, from an early date independent, prosperous, and competitive, was keener to seek commemoration

[8] See above, 117.

than their counterparts abroad. Perhaps the centralizing policies of the English Crown, by drawing more of the king's subjects into an active political society, helped to stimulate an appetite for display. Certainly the effect of those policies was to create the kind of closely meshed society in which elite commemorative tastes could quickly be appropriated by those lower down. It may be that the study of medieval funerary monuments has something important to tell us about the particularity and social distinctiveness of society in pre-modern England.

APPENDIX

A List of Sculpted Effigial Monuments of Civilians in England to *c.*1500

The list below represents an attempt to record all the extant sculpted freestone or alabaster male civilian effigial monuments for the period to *c.*1500. The list's coverage may be incomplete to the extent that it draws only partially on personal inspection of churches. A good deal of the information is derived from such printed sources as Pevsner's 'Buildings of England' series, Boutell's *Christian Monuments* (particularly useful for semi-effigials), and articles in local antiquarian periodicals. The list will have served its purpose if it stimulates further recording of a class of effigies which has received less attention than it deserves. In a few areas the process of recording has been fairly detailed—in Somerset, for example, where Alfred Fryer worked in the early twentieth century. In Suffolk, Essex, and Kent, however, there has been no systematic recording at all. Many factors influence the distribution of effigies in this list. The quality of local recording is certainly one of them.

Two groups of effigies of broadly 'civilian' type have been omitted from the list. The first is the series of diminutive effigies, such as those at Berkeley and Coberley (Glos.), which in some cases (perhaps many) may memorialize children; and the other, the small group of fifteenth-century civilians in puffed hats who are in fact semi-professional men of law. Monuments of 'flat' type—that is to say, brasses and incised slabs—are not included because comprehensive lists of these have already been published. Where possible, a suggested identification of the commemorated is offered. Unfortunately, the number of such instances is relatively few, as many of these monuments now lack an inscription, and the identity of the commemorated is difficult to establish. Equally problematical is the matter of dating. Not only are most civilian monuments lacking inscriptions; they are also lacking heraldry, because most of those commemorated were of sub-gentry rank. In the absence of such aids to dating, reliance in most cases has to be placed on attire, an attribute of only limited assistance because male civilian dress in the Middle Ages changed little over time. Estimates of date therefore have to be wide, in some cases extending to as much as a century. The final column indicates whether the monument consists of a full effigy or takes the semi-effigial form of a head or bust in a cross, perhaps with the feet emerging at the bottom. The list is arranged in roughly chronological order. Within groups of effigies arranged by date, the order is alphabetical by location. In addition to the effigies listed, there are at least two wooden effigies of civilians, those at Much Marcle (Heref.) and Little Baddow (Essex).

Identity	Date	Location	Type
Unknown	Late C13	Berrow (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Compton Martin (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Curry Rivel (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Curry Rivel (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	St Saviour's, Dartmouth (Devon)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Egginton (Derby.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Gayton (Staffs.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Hambleton (Rutland)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Hatford (Berks.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Hereford Cathedral	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Llangarron (Heref.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Long Ashton (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Long Ashton (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Paulton (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Pilton (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	St Andrew's, Plymouth	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Seavington (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Stone (Staffs.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Tetbury (Glos.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Wilton (Wilts.)	Effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Winchelsea (Sussex)	Effigial
Unknown and wife	Late C13	Winterbourne Bassett (Wilts.)	Double effigial
Unknown	Late C13	Withycombe (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Alnwick (Northumberland)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Appleby (Westmorland)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Birkin (Yorks., WR)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Bredon (Worcs.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Bristol, St James	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Buckland Dinham (Som.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Cherington (War.)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Erpingham (Norfolk)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Filey (Yorks., ER)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Garton on the Wolds (Yorks., ER)	Effigial
Unknown forester	Early C14	Glinton (Northants)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Goodmanham (Yorks., ER)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Hanbury (Staffs.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Heckington (Lincs.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Leckhampton (Glos.)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	St Michael's, Lichfield	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Loversal (Yorks., WR)	Effigial

Identity	Date	Location	Type
Unknown	Early C14	Lowthorpe (Yorks., ER)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Melsonby (Yorks., NR)	Effigial
Unknown	?Early C14	Shillingstone (Dorset)	Effigial
Unknown forester	Early C14	Skegby (Notts.)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Sopley (Hants)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Stonegrave (Yorks., NR)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Warham All Saints (Norfolk)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Willey (War.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Winchelsea (Sussex)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Wolston (War.)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C14	Yatton (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Aldborough (Yorks., WR)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	C14	Algarkirk (Lincs.)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Averham (Notts.)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Barkston (Lincs.)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Beverley Minster	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Bridgwater (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol	Semi-effigial
Unknown forester	C14	Bunbury (Ches.)	Effigial
Unknown forester	C14	Bunbury (Ches.)	Effigial
Unknown forester	C14	Bunbury (Ches.)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Burnham Market (Norfolk)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Charlton Mackrell (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Collingham (Notts.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	C14	Heckington (Lincs.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	C14	Lyddington (Rutland)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	C14	Methley (Yorks., WR)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Moor Monkton (Yorks., WR)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	C14	Offord Darcy (Hunts)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	C14	Shrewsbury Abbey	Effigial
Unknown	C14	Silchester (Hants)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	C14	Stanford on Soar (Notts.)	Effigial
Unknown	C14	West Leake (Notts.)	Effigial
William de Verney	1333	Stogursey (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	*c*.1330–40	Algarkirk (Lincs.)	Effigial
Unknown	*c*.1340	Tetbury (Glos.)	Effigial

Identity	Date	Location	Type
A member of the Turville family	*c*.1340	Thurlaston (Leics.)	Effigial
Hugh Turville	1340	Thurlaston (Leics.)	Effigial
Henry de Glanville	*c*.1344	Glanvilles Wootton (Dorset)	Effigial with sword
William de Chelten-ham	*c*.1350	Pucklechurch (Glos.)	Effigial
Unknown	Mid-C14	Bleadon (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Mid-C14	Buckhorn Weston (Dorset)	Effigial
Unknown	Mid-C14	East Coker (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Mid-C14	Hedon (Yorks., ER)	Effigial
?William de Disney	Mid-C14	Kingerby (Lincs.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown	Mid-C14	Norton Malreward (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Mid-C14	Tysoe (War.)	Semi-effigial
Unknown forester	Mid-C14	Wadworth (Yorks., WR)	Effigial
?John de Bridport	Mid-C14	Whitelackington (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	Mid-C14	Witney (Oxon.)	Effigial
William Wakebridge	*c*.1350–60	Crich (Derby.)	Effigial
Unknown	*c*.1360	Bleadon (Som.)	Effigial
Unknown	*c*.1360	Lord Mayor's Chapel, Bristol	Effigial
?William Rede	*c*.1360	Bredon (Worcs.)	Effigial
Thomas de Sloo	*c*.1360	North Curry (Som.)	Effigial
?William de la Pole	1366	Holy Trinity, Hull	Effigial
John Cokayne	1372	Ashbourne (Derby.)	Effigial
John Boneworth	1372	Sutterton (Lincs.)	Effigial
John Gour	*c*.1380	Pembridge (Heref.)	Effigial
Unknown	*c*.1380	Westley Waterless (Cambs.)	Effigial
Walter Frampton	1388	St John's, Bristol	Effigial

Identity	Date	Location	Type
?John de Campden	*c*.1390	Ampney Crucis (Glos.)	Semi-effigial
John Otewich	Late C14	St Helen's Bishopsgate, London	Effigial
Unknown	Late C14	Ampleforth (Yorks., NR)	Effigial with sword
John de Glori	Late C14	Blankney (Lincs.)	Effigial
Unknown	Early C15	Old Cleeve (Som.)	Effigial
Hugh Willoughby	1404	Willoughby on the Wolds (Notts.)	Effigial
John Lavington	1411	St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol	Effigial
John Samon	1416	St Mary's, Nottingham	Effigial, with high hat
?A member of the St Barbe family	*c*.1425	East Brent (Som.)	Effigial
William Canynges	1474	St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol	Effigial
Thomas Mede	1475	St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol	Effigial
John Barton, mason	1483	South Cave (Yorks., ER)	Semi-effigial with trade symbols
William Easton	1485	Morchard Bishop (Devon)	Effigial
Unknown	*c*.1490	Elford (Staffs.)	Semi-effigial
?Edward Hastings	*c*.1500	Egloskerry (Cornwall)	Effigial

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